

# IN THESE TIMES

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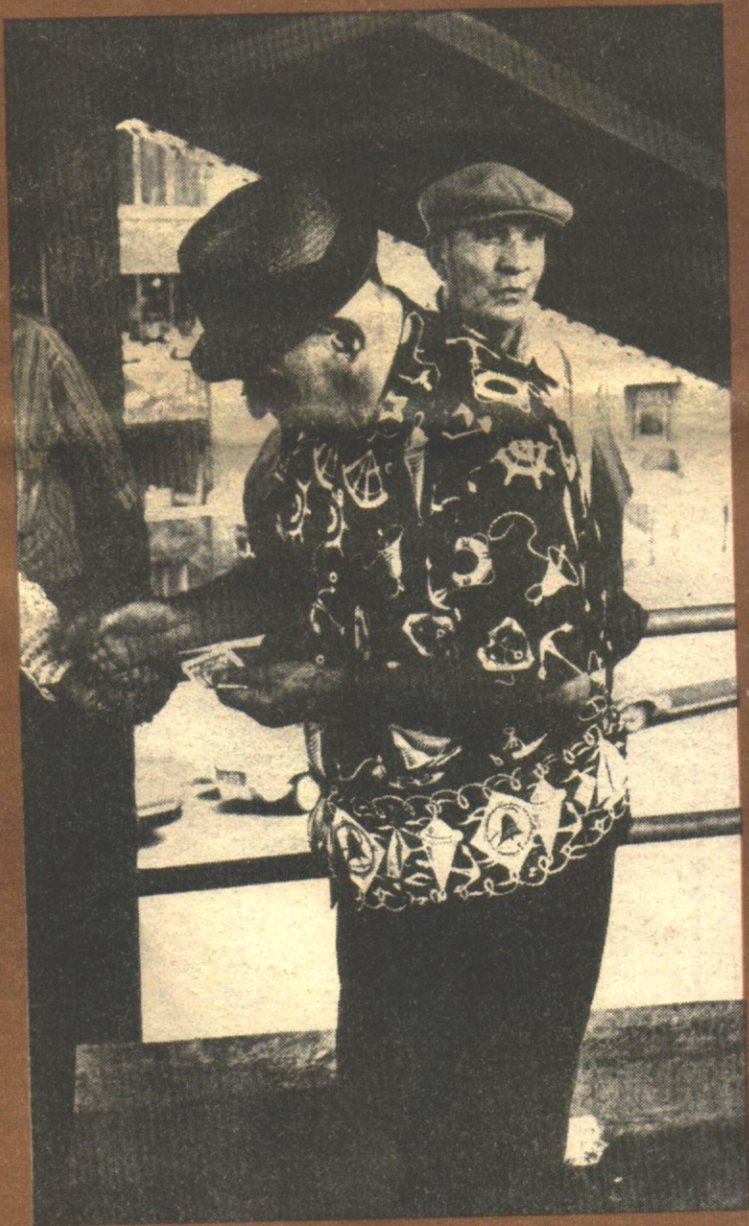
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Let  
the poor



pay



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# THE INSIDE STORY



Without the money to maintain roads, sewers and other public projects, many cities have taken a fix-it-when-it-breaks attitude.

## The public works, but not for long

By Thomas Brom

OAKLAND, CA

Fifteen years after bulldozers cleared a dozen square blocks of downtown, redevelopment fever has hit Oakland like Billy Ball. The lawsuits over the City Center project have finally been settled, and many of the community groups that brought them long forgotten. Office towers, a convention center and a Hyatt hotel are finally rising from a four-block pit near City Hall. Hong Kong developers are building a second huge complex across the street, anchored by a proposed 68-story skyscraper that will be taller than anything in San Francisco.

As ironworkers baby-step along steel I-beams in the lot nearby, it's hard to believe that this is a decaying city crumbling around the edges. But it is.

The miracle of unequal development in the United States actually encourages new buildings while much of the city's infrastructure falls apart. Oakland—like hundreds of other cities in the East and Midwest with much crueler climates—virtually stopped spending money on roads, bridges, sewers and parks when the fiscal crunch hit in the mid-'70s. Now this city, with nearly 20 percent of its population below the poverty line and no money for essential services, is listed as one of California's "problem cities." The Urban Institute has devoted an entire book to the decline of the city's infrastructure, even as Mayor Lionel Wilson shovels the first spadeful of dirt at City Center.

Oakland's department of public works, for instance, which is in charge of road maintenance, is essentially operating on a schedule for collapse.

"The department knows it's not getting any money, so why bother making a fuss," says Oakland City Council member Wilson Riles, Jr. "Look, we're closing libraries and selling off the museum and city auditorium. We're boarding up fire stations and cutting back police. Human problems are a lot more immediate here than cracks in the road." "Infrastructure just isn't high on the political agenda," he adds.

For all the office towers sprouting up across the Bay in San Francisco, the public works situation there isn't much better. "Deferred maintenance is a way of life here," comments supervisor Harry Britt. "We just imported 60 worn-out buses from L.A. for emergency service because half the city's diesel buses are in the shop for repairs. The attitude is always, 'Fix it when it

breaks.' You only do a new sewer system, for instance, when the feds pay for it."

The problem is that the feds aren't paying any more, and state and local governments can't raise the money themselves. Proposition 13 tax limitations in California and similar restrictions in 18 other states have all but ended the general-obligation bond—the standard method of financing public works. That leaves city hall in the lurch, unable to do much more than watch the cracks grow in the ceiling.

### The writing on the crumbling wall.

But now corporate America—beneficiary of the nation's canals, railroads, highways and water and sewer systems—is sitting up and taking notice. Pat Choate, senior policy analyst for TRW Inc., just completed a study called "America in Ruins" for the Council of State Planning Agencies. "At least two-thirds—and more likely three-fourths—of the nation's communities are out of the economic development business," he concluded, "because their infrastructure won't underpin a modern economy."

Economist George Peterson is producing a similar study for the Urban Institute, finding, to no one's surprise, that cities with deteriorating capital plant can't attract business by giving away the store.

Dr. Fred Collignon, chairman of the city and regional planning department at the University of California in Berkeley, gathered information on Bay Area cities for the Urban Institute study. "In the years since passage of Proposition 13, spending on infrastructure in Oakland was cut 50 to 70 percent," he says. "Because of the deferred maintenance, there's a very big cost coming down the road."

Corporate America's biggest concern is who will eventually be stuck with the check when cities fall apart. That unanswered question is presently one of the hidden issues in the shoving match between Reagan administration supply-side economists and Wall Street.

The Reagan position—flying in the face of 200 years of public subsidy to private enterprise—is enough to give a corporate executive cold sweats. Budget director David Stockman outlined the argument recently in an interview with Ben Wattenberg on public television. Wasn't the dredging of the Red River in Arkansas and Oklahoma a splendid use of federal money, Wattenberg wanted to know. The project would make the river navigable by Gulf shippers, improving the economy along the entire length of the waterway.

Stockman wasn't impressed. Why substitute canal transportation for existing road and rail lines, he asked. There would be no guarantee of a net economic gain, and no guarantee businesses wouldn't just relocate from other areas. If the market wants new infrastructure, he concluded, the market will supply it.

Such reasoning is quietly terrifying U.S. business leaders, who have no intention of assuming additional costs of production. The policy battle now taking shape is apparently about saving the municipal bond market, but the real subject is who will pay for the country's urban infrastructure.

New York investment bankers Henry Kaufman of Salomon Brothers and Felix Rohatyn of Lazard Freres have already assumed point position for the opposition. Both men have criticized high interest rates and the Reagan tax law changes for destroying the municipal bond market, though they imply this is merely an unfortunate consequence—and not a calculated result—of Reagan's policies.

Kaufman prefers to speak of "crowding out" in the marketplace, where city bond issues can no longer compete with corporate and federal offers. Rohatyn claims,

"We have legislated away, without knowing it, the subsidy for municipal funding."

But the gloves may come off in this gentleman's disagreement in California, where local government is almost ludicrously desperate in the wake of Proposition 13 cutbacks and taxing limitations.

"Just about all we talk about at statewide meetings are loopholes in the language of Prop. 13," says Sean Gordon, aide to Berkeley mayor Gus Newport. "We have raised fees for nearly every service in the city, from photocopy charges and parking meters to garbage collection. Yet we still have unfunded liability of \$68 million over the next 10 years for the city's physical plant and equipment."

Berkeley voters have already passed a special library tax by the almost impossible two-thirds margin mandated by Prop. 13. The City Council will probably hold a special election early in 1982 asking voters to pass a second tax, a 7 percent surcharge based on housing square-footage, to preserve essential services. But the money still won't be enough to maintain and rebuild the infrastructure, and the Berkeley taxes would be difficult to duplicate in other communities. Since passage of Prop. 13 in 1978, only 10 cities in California have managed to pass additional taxes, and most of those have been upper-income suburban communities voting to preserve fire, police or libraries.

### Enough is enough.

Each year the magnitude of the public works problem grows, as deferred maintenance leads to breakdowns and replacement costs.

Collignon at the University of California believes that as the cities start visibly to fall apart, communities will begin to pass public-works initiatives by the required two-thirds votes. "I don't see private corporations stepping in to pick up the tab," he says. "Public works have long been defined as 'market failures' best left to taxing authorities, and I don't see that changing."

But some community leaders in the state recognize that more is at stake than methods of public finance. "Proposition 13 is basically a political problem, not a legal problem," says San Francisco supervisor Britt. "Middle-class people are tired of subsidizing poor people for the benefit of the rich—so they voted a lid on taxes. Now we can't even satisfy the needs of the corporations. Expansion is dead in many cities, and business needs us. We have the opportunity in this crisis to democratize the public sector—not privatize it."

A coalition of labor and community groups in the state led by the California Tax Reform Association (CTRA) is currently supporting a "split-roll" property tax initiative targeted for the statewide ballot in November 1982. The bill would establish different tax bases for residential and business property.

"There isn't anything California cities can do to bail themselves out until changes are made in the state constitution," says Stephen Smith, director of CTRA. "Statewide polls have shown that people now see the need for more government revenue, and we think people can be convinced it should come from business."

Smith sees the Reagan supply-side ideology as an unwitting ally in the coalition's split-roll tax campaign. "Reagan is clearly testing the notion that corporate America is going to do public services—which is scaring the hell out of the business community," he says.

"Business leaders are afraid first of all, of a depression brought on by supply-side economics and, secondly, of a backlash by the voters that will take years to recover from. Wall Street is afraid this guy means what he says—and we intend to use that fear to neutralize our opposition."

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# Nickel and diming the poor



By Mark Kelman

PALO ALTO, CA

**P**RESIDENT REAGAN'S Economic Recovery Tax Act of 1981 has clearly not led to economic recovery in 1981. The president himself acknowledges that we are in a recession; he now recognizes that his staff's economic projections—made as recently as July to underpin his tax plans—are far too optimistic.

Obviously, the most serious question the administration faces is whether the supply-side economic program will work at all. Will one ever really see a spurt of productive investment now that Congress has radically diminished taxes on private saving (through pension and retirement account reform, near abolition of the gift and estate tax and more favorable treatment of capital gains) and corporate investment (through liberalization of depreciation allowances, tax boons for research and development and a new equipment-leasing system that enables companies with losses to share their investment tax credits and unusable depreciation with companies that would otherwise pay higher taxes)?

But there is a short-run concern as well, which has sharpened into a mini-crisis over the past two weeks, dividing conservative Senate Republicans from the executive. Budget Director David Stockman from Treasury Secretary Donald Regan. The persistent sluggishness of the economy, which rather automatically leads both to lower government revenues and higher transfer payment obligations (unemployment benefits, for example, increase in a recession), has put enormous pressure on the administration to take steps to avoid large budget deficits in the next three fiscal years. The deficits themselves are believed, by most economists and significant numbers of investors, to exacerbate inflation and to aggravate the slump, insofar as government borrowing to finance the deficit "squeezes out" investment borrowing by other sources.

While Reagan once promised a balanced budget by fiscal year 1984, optimistic projections now imply that a \$40 billion deficit would occur if current policies remain unaltered—pessimistic ones foresee a deficit between \$100 and \$150 billion. It seems almost certain that the president would actually prefer further to reduce federal spending to make up the gap, both because there are social programs he has no particular attachment to and because of his ongoing faith that one must not raise taxes and thwart the work and productivity boom that should inevitably follow the 1981 tax reductions.

Politically, though, it appears equally clear that there are limits on his ability to persuade even Senate Republicans of the wisdom of further social spending cuts: it's likely that he will be able to get only \$7 to \$8 billion of the \$13 billion of cuts he proposed in September. It is vaguely plausible that Social Security benefits could, in the long term, be drastically curtailed, even in the face of the organized opposition of older voters. But it is hard to see that there is much room for other welfare cuts in a nation in which poverty is on the short-term increase. Nearly 70 percent of those receiving Food Stamp assistance were, by 1980,

below a very tightly defined poverty line. What, then, is left?

The most realistic possibility, now being pushed by Senate Republicans—though currently on the back burner, according to Secretary Regan—is to raise certain taxes (for example, doubling the excise levies on tobacco and alcohol) without increasing the tax burden of the well-off. As a cosmetic political matter, one cannot explicitly raise income taxes only for those in the lower brackets. The 1981 Act obviously cut taxes enormously more for the wealthy than for the poor: A single earner with a family of four earning \$100,000 will save roughly \$5,400 by 1983 (5.384 percent) while the single earner making \$10,000 a year will save only \$151 (1.51 percent). Even a conservative Congress would likely balk at now legislating away the recently enacted cuts only for the poor.

But it is possible to get much the same effect by simply raising non-income taxes that, as a matter of fact, fall most heavily on the poor. The recently proposed doubling of the alcohol and cigarette excise do exactly that. A more extensive and more radically anti-egalitarian proposal—which one can expect to hear more about if the deficit crunch worsens—would be to enact a federal value added tax (VAT). This sort of tax, common

a plurality of taxpayers earning less than \$10,000 a year believe that a sales tax is the most beneficial sort of levy for them. There is doubtless also a delusion that a sales tax is somehow more voluntary than an income tax: one can, after all, theoretically avoid it entirely by not buying anything. (As one can avoid income taxes by earning nothing, but few seem to focus on that.) Moreover, sales taxes are somewhat invisible—the price of each item rises, in much the same way the prices of goods rise during periods of inflation, but no discrete chunk of money is withheld from a paycheck or mailed in on April 15.

But why do the conservatives want to get away with a more regressive tax on consumption? Obviously, the right has long felt that even our very mildly progressive tax system is excessively redistributive. This position is grounded in conceptions of property rights and desert: the widely publicized lavish spending habits of the new Washington crowd (most visible and dramatic in Nancy Reagan's case) are the habits of those who believe the rich are entitled, and that government steps that interfere with the market's "natural" hierarchy are expropriative and immoral. These anti-redistributive sentiments have certainly been buttressed by what now appears as the obviously apologetic supply-side macro-

than those with a rate of 10 percent. Likewise, while "second earners" in a household seem to choose to work or to vary their hours depending on marginal tax rates, there is very little reason to believe that the work effort of primary earners is especially sensitive to the sorts of shifts in tax rates that Congress considers.

Despite the apparent failure of the supply-side claims in both Britain and the U.S. (rational expectations theory would predict that an investment boom would have occurred as soon as congressional enactment of the Reagan cuts appeared certain), it is extremely unlikely that the right will be pressed into abandoning its program of reducing taxes for the rich any time soon, in part because of the political disorganization of the few remaining liberals in Congress and in part because the liberals may correctly sense that Reaganomics ought to be allowed to run its course, to purge it from the nation's political discourse.

Moreover, it is unlikely that the right will raise income taxes when higher taxes on consumption are an available option. Given the focus on under investment over the past few years, it is likely that a consumption tax—which makes savings relatively more attractive than it would be in a taxless world—will dominate tax

Sales and excise taxes are a politically acceptable means of shifting a bigger load onto low-income groups.



in Europe, operates in practice as a national sales tax. And like any sales tax not specifically focused on luxury purchases, it would certainly be regressive in impact: poorer people would pay a higher percentage of their income than would richer people. British Prime Minister Thatcher, who has faced much the same sort of revenue shortfall as her ideological cousin in Washington, has turned to higher and higher taxes on consumption over the past two years.

## **Ignorance is expensive.**

Why, as a political matter, can conservative legislators "get away" with enacting regressive VATs or consumption taxes when increasing revenues by enacting a regressive income tax reform is so tricky? Partly, it seems, many voters misconstrue their interests through simple ignorance of the incidence of these "exotic" taxes:

economic models, which imply that relatively high marginal taxes affecting only the rich significantly deter both investment and high-productivity work.

The basis of the supply-side claims seemed to be the simplest microeconomic wisdom: taxes on income make working relatively more expensive *vis a vis* leisure than it would be in a world without taxes and lowers the effective (after-tax) rate of return on investment that currently makes consumption more attractive, compared to investing, than it would be in a taxless world. But such homilies are a poor guide to public policy (though an effective conservative rhetorical ploy): While it is clear that an investor will switch from a sure investment returning 5 percent to a sure one returning 10 percent, it is much less clear that countries with a long-term real rate of return of 5 percent generate significantly less capital

policies for the foreseeable future, particularly because they are generally regressive and thus meet the right's distributional preferences as well.

The choices facing those opposed to the anti-egalitarian tax policies of the Reagan administration are limited by their current lack of political clout. One would hope that attention could at least be focused on defeating those regressive reforms that will be difficult to undo (for instance, it could be very difficult to reinstate a wealth-transfer tax if such transfers are allowed to remain exempt for a considerable period) and on pointing out, again and again, what the president is promising in terms of economic performance, and what we're getting back in terms of both aggregate production and income distribution.

Mark Kelman teaches tax law at the Stanford Law School.



# IN SHORT

## The best votes in life are free

In mid-October, reports Robert E. Mutch, the U.S. Supreme Court heard arguments in a little-publicized case—*Citizens Against Rent Control v. Berkeley*—an outgrowth of the latest legal attempt by a state or local government to curb the influence of big money in deciding ballot measures. At issue in this case is a provision in Berkeley's election reform law setting a \$250 limit on contributions to campaigns for referenda and initiatives—a measure that was designed to prevent sizable monetary imbalances, especially when corporate interests are at stake. The city's lawyers cite declining voter turnout and "a widespread perception that large amounts of money skew the outcome of ballot-measure elections" to support their claim that the ceiling is needed to halt an "erosion of confidence in government." Both sides won rounds in the case's progress through the California court system, but past decisions give supporters of the Berkeley law little cause for hope.

Similar contribution ceilings have already been struck down in Massachusetts, Montana, New York and, again, in Berkeley. In those cases, the courts reasoned that massive contributions cannot really sway an electorate contemplating a ballot measure the way money can corrupt individual candidates. And in the past the Supreme Court has explicitly rejected equality of political resources as a rightful component of the American Way: In the 1976 *Buckley v. Valeo* case, a challenge to the 1974 federal election reform, the Court asserted that "the concept that government may restrict the speech of some elements of our society in order to enhance the relative voice of others is wholly foreign to the First Amendment."

## Gilding the lily-white

Two years to the day after five Communist Worker Party members were killed in a clash with the Ku Klux Klan in Greensboro, N.C., that city further distinguished itself on Nov. 3 by electing its first all-white City Council since 1968. Paul Luebke and Steve Schewel report that Greensboro's white establishment, made nervous by the success of four left candidates (two blacks, one white and one Native American) in an October primary, hastily assembled a new, conservative slate to oppose them. In 10 days, the city's elite had raised \$30,000 and launched a media campaign urging white voters to "stand up for Greensboro." The highest voter turnout ever for a Greensboro City Council election on the part of blacks, who make up about a third of the city's population, was not enough to offset heavy voting in the affluent northwest quadrant and ambivalence in the white working-class communities.

## Victory's a relative thing

"We started with an idea—to build an alternative party," says Citizens Party co-chair Barry Commoner. "And in only two years it is becoming a reality." To the casual observer, these words might seem overly joyful: The party entered 45 races this fall, won one, missed winning two other contests by 1 percent of the vote and placed second in six others. (The victory was a school board seat in Seattle, Wash., won with 69 percent of the vote.)

But party officials, pointing also to three electoral victories and two second-place showings in the spring, say they can claim an "excellent" showing in one-quarter of the races entered this year. Citizens Party executive director Rick LaRue explains their optimism in terms of gains over previous attempts: "In Albany this fall we received 30 percent of the vote in a City Council election that saw us receive 5 percent last year. In January we received 6 percent of the vote in a state assembly race in Charlottesville, Va., and in the same district [on Nov. 3] our candidate received 19 percent of the vote."

## More moving violations

When we last visited Detroit's Poletown neighborhood ("In Short," July 29), the city was marking Bastille Day by leveling the Immaculate Conception Church and arresting 12 Poletown residents who refused to vacate the building. As Jeanie Wylie reported, the church had come to symbolize resistance to the planned destruction of the whole community to make way for a General Motors Cadillac plant.

Why the rush? Well, GM had laid down the law to the city: If you want us to stay, land for our new plant must be cleared immediately (*In These Times*, Feb. 4). So Detroit took advantage of its own new "quick-take" law to push people out of their homes as fast as possible, and with limited opportunity for appeals. At the time, GM insisted that it couldn't stop for a moment to consider a plan for redesigning the plant that might have saved most of Poletown from the wrecking ball.

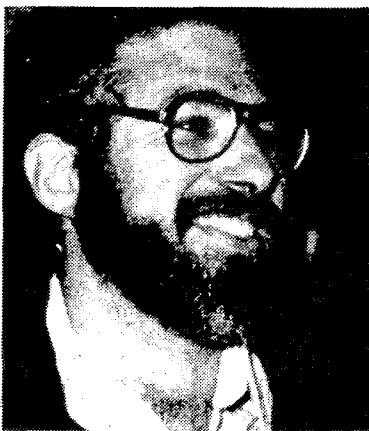
That was then. Now—with all of the land cleared except for a wooden cross where the church once stood and with only one adamant citizen remaining in his house—the auto manufacturer has announced that it will delay construction of the plant for at least one year. And what with more sweeping cutbacks in GM's construction plans, it's still possible that the company won't even build the plant.

—Josh Kornbluth



John Laird and Mardi Wormhoudt on the night of their election to the Santa Cruz City Council

## A few happy returns...



Mike Rotkin is likely to become California's first socialist mayor.

## New majority in Santa Cruz

SANTA CRUZ, CA—"John Laird is a socialist-feminist who never worked a day in his life. Who gives a damn what he thinks?" growled conservative candidate Larry Edler to a reporter grilling him about a left challenger in the City Council race.

But Edler apparently underestimated the number of residents who cared what Laird thought: On Nov. 3, for the first time in Santa Cruz history, conservatives lost control of City Hall. Laird and Mardi Wormhoudt won by a landslide, joining socialist council members Mike Rotkin and Bruce Van Allen to form the City Council's first left majority.

Edler was wrong on other counts as well: Neither county administrator Laird nor any other left candidates running for City Council defined themselves as "socialist-feminist." And an initiative calling for a cutoff of all military aid to El Salvador, criticized by Edler as an "artificial issue" that was "irrelevant to Santa Cruz," made an unusually strong showing at the polls, passing by a two-to-one margin.

Rent control and affordable housing are among the top priorities of the new council majority. They have a tough job on their hands: Santa Cruz—a small university town below San Francisco whose beaches, boardwalk and redwoods draw thousands of tourists each year—is plagued

by high unemployment, skyrocketing rents and a vacancy rate of less than 2 percent, a level that the federal government classifies as a "housing emergency."

The council majority also expects to move swiftly on the issues of pay equity and affirmative action. They plan to begin a study of city jobs, modeled after the now-famous Hay Report, which revealed that women city workers in San Jose were paid far less than men for doing comparable work. Even if the price tag for adjusting pay scales is thousands of dollars, Laird said, "the question is not whether to do it, but how to do it."

One of the council's greatest challenges will be raising the money it needs to carry out its ambitious programs. "We've got to be creative in our search for funds," said Laird, smiling. "We're going to surprise people, to reach out to businesses, to unexpected quarters." He anticipates no hard feelings among the conservative council minority, all of whom have pledged cooperation.

New American Movement member Rotkin, likely to become California's only socialist mayor if elected by the council as expected, told a local reporter that he doesn't view the council "as a place to abstractly push the idea of socialism. Just occasionally, about once a month, we have the opportunity to point out that the logic of capitalism has become absurd."

—Diana Hembree

## Boston voters opt for peace

BOSTON—Though not all the votes in Boston's Nov. 3 general election had yet been counted, a Pentagon representative was on the phone the following morning to see how Boston voters had responded to a referendum asking Congress to spend more on butter and less on guns.

"I found out," the Pentagon representative said. Boston residents had passed the referendum by a two-to-one margin.

Some 42,900 voted for, while only 16,400 voted against, non-

binding referendum question No. 4, asking whether the Boston City Council should urge "Congress to make more federal funds available for local jobs and programs—in quality education, public transportation, energy-efficient housing, improved health care and other essential services—by reducing the amount of our tax dollars spent on nuclear weapons and programs of foreign military intervention."

The question was successfully petitioned for entry on the ballot by an organization called the Jobs with Peace Campaign, which, according to campaign coordinator Frank Clemente, started three years ago in San Francisco. It has since grown into a national network with similar operations currently working in Seattle, Chicago and Pittsburgh, he said.

Clemente said he hoped the administration would see that "there is a significant constituency out there opposed to the administration's economic policies," a constituency concerned less with the Soviet military threat than with "the economic security of their own community."

The primary goal of the Jobs with Peace Campaign is to generate national opposition to the buildup of military weapons—particularly nuclear weapons—which come at the expense of badly needed domestic services, Clemente said. "We want this to be the key issue in the 1984 presidential election and we figure it's best to start on local ballots where people can understand it."

The Pentagon spokesman who called Jobs with Peace headquarters said he was calling because an official "high up inside the department" wanted to know as "a matter of personal interest," not because of Defense Department concern.

The affirmative response to the guns-or-butter question in Boston came in the aftermath of Prop. 2½, a statewide property tax-cutting measure passed a year ago that has helped to exacerbate a city fiscal crisis, causing scores of police, fire and other municipal workers to be laid off.



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The organization's inception in San Francisco in 1978, Clemente said, was spurred mostly by reaction to a similar tax-cutting measure there, Proposition 13.

"Our intent is to run this same campaign in about 20 cities next year," Clemente said.

—Kevin B. Blackstone

## Durham picks biracial slate

DURHAM, NC—A black-white coalition won a stunning victory over the conservative business establishment in the Nov. 3 City Council elections here, with three blacks and three whites taking five of six council seats and the mayoralty.

The Durham Committee on the Affairs of Black People has long been one of the South's most powerful electoral organizations, but only in recent years have white leftists in Durham had enough clout to provide the committee's candidates with the crucial margin of victory. The biracial slate's victory was fueled by an intense door-to-door campaign for council candidate Tom Campbell, 33, a white former student activist who now manages a bookstore that serves as a focal point for Durham's left and student communities.

Campbell campaigned for such issues as city intervention in utility rate-increase cases and a halt to commercial spot zoning in residential areas. While advocating downtown development, Campbell opposed a tax hike to support a city-financed civic center, the pet project of most of Tuesday's defeated incumbents. Campbell also addressed head-on the issue that his campaign polls found to be most salient among voters—crime. He called for some of the standard remedies like "more cops on the beat," but also stressed the enhancement of closely-knit neighborhoods as an essential deterrent to crime.

Coalition for Economical Energy campaign manger Alfred Stanley (left), City Council member Roger Duncan and Constable Margaret Gomez celebrate Austin's rejection of a mismanaged nuclear venture.



"Election night was a dream come true," said Campbell campaign strategist Susan Edgman. "Black and white organizations promoted each other's candidates, and we delivered the highest white vote for black candidates in Durham's political history."

The victorious coalition included, in addition to the Committee on Black Affairs, the Durham Voters Alliance—organized over the past decade by the city's white liberals, most of whom are connected to Duke University—and the North Carolina People's Alliance, which in the past five years has effectively placed neighborhood and pocketbook issues on the city's political agenda. The cooperation of these groups made Nov. 3 "a memorable day," in the words of one campaign worker. "Campbell ran on our issues, the interracial alliance held and Durham may never be the same."

—Steve Schewel & Paul Luebke

## Austin kicks nuclear habit

AUSTIN, TX—Voters here have approved a ballot measure that authorizes the City Council to sell Austin's 16 percent share in the mismanaged and shabbily constructed South Texas Nuclear Project (STNP), a cooperative venture of the cities of Houston, San Antonio, Corpus Christi and Austin.

For anti-nuke activists, the Nov. 3 victory was the culmination of a 10-year struggle to get Austin to kick the nuclear habit—a costly addiction that has grown from \$161 million in 1973 to \$768 million in 1981. Alfred Stanley, campaign manager of the antinuclear Coalition for Economical Energy, noted that the issue of cheaper energy finally provided the incentive for Austin voters, after such issues as public safety and nuclear-waste disposal problems had failed to move them during the

past decade.

Austinites still don't have the monkey of STNP completely off their backs. Despite voter rejection (58 percent to 42 percent) of a plant that is already 400 percent over budget, more than six years behind schedule and less than half completed, Austin must still find a buyer for its share.

But defeat of the nuke is just one element in Austin's changing political hue. Liberals swept into five out of six City Council seats last spring, backed by a coalition of environmental, neighborhood, labor and minority organizations. Once in office, the new council proceeded to set up an inverted electric rate structure, replace an obstreperous city manager and authorize the nuclear referendum.

—Margot E. Beutler



Houston mayoral runoff contenders Kathy Whitmire and Jack Heard agree that the city must stop overextending itself.



## Houstonians tire of growth

HOUSTON—The woman was perturbed. She was at what was supposed to have been an election-night victory party for Mayor Jim McConn. Instead, the gathering had degenerated into communal hand-wringing when it became apparent that not only would McConn not win, but he would also place no better than

receive an endorsement from someone who purported to be a local Klan official, though the sheriff quickly shrugged off the support.

But while the race now appears to be a classic confrontation between a conservative and a liberal, the two candidates do share some concerns about the state of the nation's fourth largest city. And the rejection of McConn, 53, a former home builder, is an indication that the future of the South's premier boom town may run counter to its past.

For two terms, McConn had carried the torch for growth, growth and more growth. But the city's robust economic health—a 4 percent unemployment rate, the third highest per capita income among major U.S. cities, low property taxes and a population that increases with the swiftness of rabbits—has come at no small expense.

When money was needed, city officials preferred to annex new areas, boosting the tax base instead of raising taxes. Great idea—until you remember that new areas require new city services. But instead of expanding its already deteriorating services, the city simply extended them, stretching them until service throughout Houston was uniformly poor.

For years, Houston's residents were willing to make a trade, forgoing adequate city services for a few dollars more in their pockets. Reflecting that philosophy, McConn once countered complaints by remarking: "We may have potholes in Houston, but at least you've got enough money in your jeans to get the damn tire fixed."

Whitmire, who ran first in the Nov. 3 balloting with 36 percent of the vote, has called for tough

third in the 15-candidate mayoral field.

There would be a runoff, but it would not include the incumbent. Instead, the contest would be between Kathy Whitmire, the 35-year-old, two-term city controller, and Jack Heard, 63, the law-and-order sheriff of Harris County. The choice did not excite the woman.

"I'll tell you what," she said. "Time magazine will be able to say the next mayor of Houston was elected either by the Gay Political Caucus or the Ku Klux Klan. Hell of a note, but that's all it boils down to."

It wasn't quite that simple, though in a heated race, Whitmore—a personable, business-like liberal—indeed had been endorsed by Houston's well-organized Gay Political Caucus. And the John Wayne-ish Heard did

restraints on unplanned growth and promised to upgrade service by increasing efficiency. Heard, who attracted 25 percent of the vote, tends toward a slightly more lenient attitude toward growth, but has said he will oppose further annexation until services are improved in existing parts of town.

Houston's liberals have rushed to Whitmire's side, while the conservatives stand beside Heard. The city's powerful black bloc—divided in the first election by the candidacy of Al Green, a 34-year-old black justice of the peace—is expected to swing to Whitmire.

Regardless of who wins, the race already has made an impact in Houston, sending a message to the city's leaders. The message: no more growth for growth's sake. Quantity, Houstonians seem to have decided, doesn't always mean quality.

—Wade Roberts

## Nukes reined in Washington

YAKIMA, WA—When Washington State voters passed an initiative requiring that public agencies obtain voter approval of bond issues for major public energy projects, they said "whoa" to WPPSS. The acronym (pronounced "whoops") stands for Washington Public Power Supply System, a joint agency of state public utilities, whose notorious cost overruns—including \$19.7 billion for five nuclear power plants now under construction—mean that WPPSS power will cost three times more than power from comparable plants in other states. Years behind schedule, two of the WPPSS nukes have recently been mothballed until 1983, when officials will determine their fate. None of the five has turned out a kilowatt.

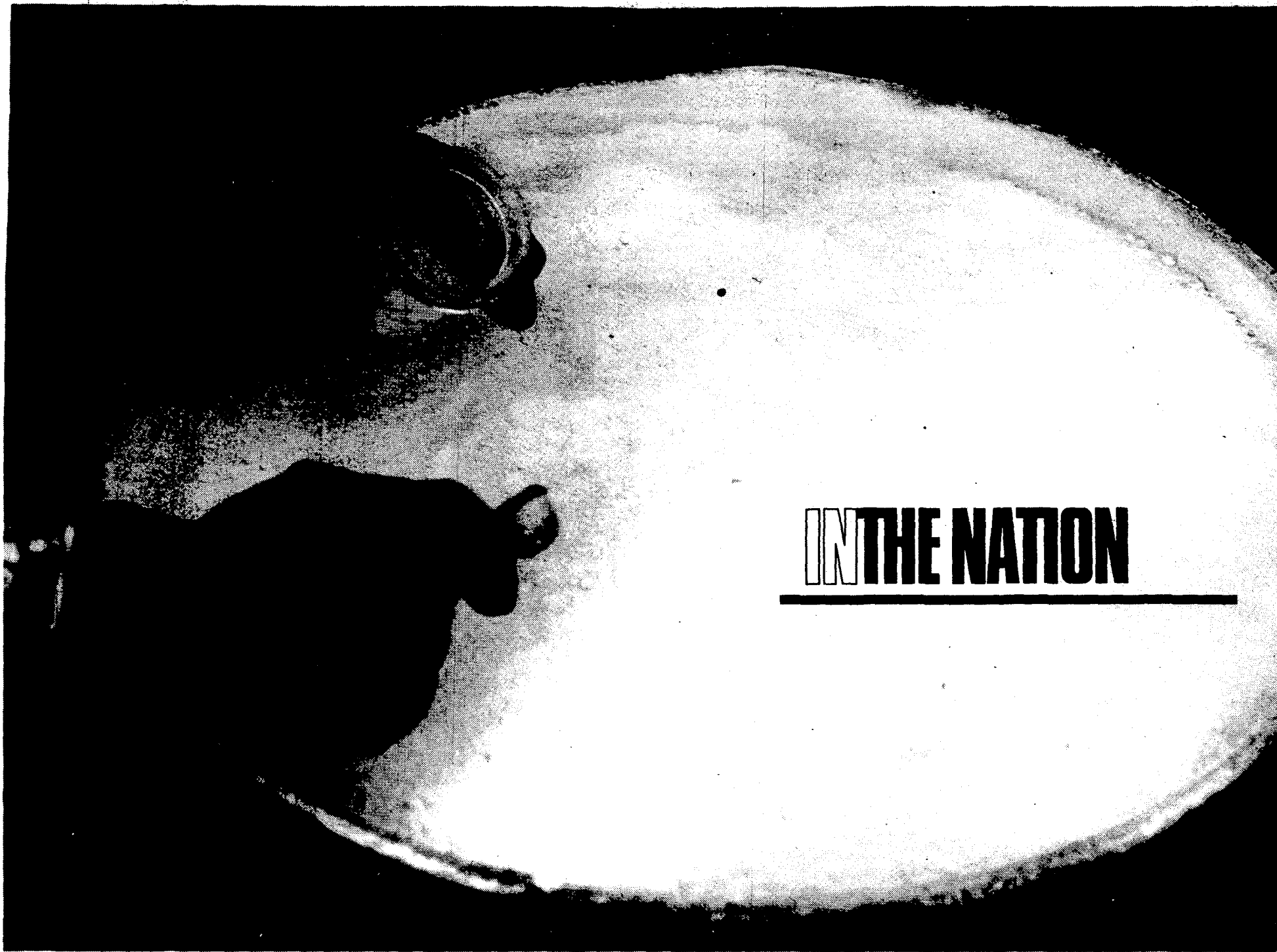
Opponents of the initiative raised a record \$1.3 million (mostly from WPPSS contractors) and bombarded voters with TV, radio and newspaper ads that warned against the high cost of educating the electorate about each bond offering. (In one of these ads, the actor decides the issues are just too complicated for him, so he should vote "No.")

A handful of determined initiative committee members conducted polls, placed pro-initiative ads, wrote letters to the editor and crisscrossed the state drumming up grass-roots and media support. They emphasized WPPSS' impact on electric bills, the anti-initiative role of the major contractors and the ability of people accustomed to voting on school and sewer bonds to comprehend energy projects.

Passage of the initiative means that an agency wanting to raise money to construct or continue building a large power plant will have to convince its ratepayers of the need for and the cost-effectiveness of its proposal. The agency must submit a budget and the state must publish pro and con arguments. The intent is to make an industry that deals in vital energy resources accountable to the public it is licensed to serve.

—Nancy Faller





Uranium ore ready for processing into "yellow cake" at a mill near Grants, N.Y. When it is then used to fuel a reactor, plutonium is produced as a byproduct.

## ARMS POLICY

# The mask is off the "peaceful atom"

By Joseph R. Egan

CHICAGO

**N**OW THAT IT HAS COMMITTED itself to the MX missile, the neutron bomb and the cruise missile—all of which require man-made plutonium for their warheads—the Reagan administration faces another dilemma: existing facilities that produce plutonium for military use will not be adequate to meet the sharp increase in demand. Nor are expensive new production facilities, which would have long lead times and slow production rates, likely to keep pace with the nation's ambitious weapons program. Yet the alternative, converting the spent fuel from civilian nuclear power plants for military purposes, would undermine three decades of careful U.S. efforts to control the spread of nuclear weapons to other nations.

These are the unsavory choices now confronting the Department of Energy, whose national laboratories have jurisdiction over the design and development of the new explosives. In Oct. 1 testimony before a House Interior subcommittee, acting deputy assistant energy secretary Charles Gilbert confirmed that both options are now under consideration. But other witnesses testified that Energy Secretary James Edwards has already "endorsed" the second option of extracting plutonium from spent fuel of commercial nuclear power plants.

For any previous U.S. administration, this second option would have been unthinkable. Since 1953, when President Eisenhower opened the door to civilian use of nuclear energy with his "Atoms for Peace" program, U.S. policy has sought to discourage any direct link between the civilian and the military uses of nuclear energy. International organizations were set up and treaties negoti-

ated to guarantee that this link would not exist.

Now the Reagan administration has demonstrated its resolve to think the unthinkable. Policy makers have dusted off the tombstones of the gold standard, the B-1 bomber and the anti-ballistic missile system. Need we additional proof that this latest proposal is indeed under serious consideration?

### A better class of explosive.

The effectiveness of plutonium in nuclear explosives was demonstrated on August 9, 1945 with the destruction of

**Until now, any direct link between civilian programs and nuclear arms was unthinkable.**

Nagasaki, Japan. The earlier destruction of Hiroshima had been accomplished with a uranium-fueled weapon. But plutonium was found to have technical and economic advantages that made it a more suitable material for most modern nuclear weapons.

Plutonium is produced from the uranium that is used to fuel nuclear reactors. When uranium atoms split to create nuclear energy, neutrons released in the reaction are absorbed by remaining uranium atoms to produce plutonium. After this process has gone on for a period of months or years, plutonium can be chemically separated from the spent reactor fuel.

Some military nuclear reactors, called "dedicated production facilities," are designed only to produce plutonium in its

purest form. There are now four of these reactors operating in the United States. A small facility of this kind, which costs more than \$300 million, can produce roughly 220 pounds of plutonium a year, enough for 10 to 20 bombs. But even small reactors take seven years to construct—and the Reagan military buildup will require hundreds, not dozens, of explosives.

Civilian reactors, on the other hand, are designed to produce electricity, not plutonium. But in the process of producing commercial power, about 500 pounds of recoverable plutonium are produced each year in a standard-size reactor—most of it now stored idly in spent fuel pools at commercial reactor sites around the country. Because the government has not yet made a final decision on permanent disposal of these wastes, many of the pools are now filled to capacity.

Civilian reactors produce a lower grade of plutonium than military reactors. Though suitable for crude nuclear weapons, this plutonium must be purified in order to be used in the modern, efficient explosives now being manufactured by the U.S. at a rate of three a day. This purification process, called isotope separation or enrichment, has always been a complex and expensive procedure—so much so that, until recently, the use of civilian spent fuel as a plutonium source has not only been an unthinkable option, but an uneconomical one as well.

Now a new purification process called Laser Isotope Separation (LIS) has caused the Energy Department to reconsider the attractiveness of civilian nuclear wastes. Using the new process—currently under development at Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory in California—plutonium can be purified by lasers at a fraction of the cost of previous methods. According to researchers, the LIS process may be available as early as the late 1980s. So the conversion of spent

fuel is now seen as a method by which the Reagan administration can fulfill both its military and its budgetary promises simultaneously—avoiding costly new construction without slowing the pace of the arms buildup.

### Forget the "peaceful atom."

But at the Oct. 1 congressional hearing, subcommittee chair Edward Markey (D-Mass.) and Rep. James Weaver (D-Ore.) promised to push legislation that would bar the Energy Department from extracting plutonium from civilian fuel for military purposes. According to Markey, such a program would "blast a gaping hole in U.S. non-proliferation policy."

How would this figurative blast occur? First, and most important, the decision would send a clear signal to developing nations that plutonium diversion from civilian to military uses is an acceptable and, indeed, desirable policy. The U.S. has always taken a "do what we say, not what we do" posture with respect to nuclear energy development in the third world. Over the past 30 years, while we were building up our own nuclear weapons arsenal, we promised technical assistance for civilian nuclear programs only to those nations willing to forego the pursuit of nuclear weapons. Largely through U.S. efforts, the International Atomic Energy Agency, an independent arm of the United Nations, was created to ensure that new members of the nuclear family would confine their nuclear activities to civilian programs. On this basis, the U.S. began actively promoting foreign nuclear development, assuring the world that the military and the civilian applications of the atom could be kept separate.

In 1978 the conditions for nuclear technology exports were made even more restrictive. The Nuclear Non-Proliferation

*Continued on page 22*



## LABOR

# Recession a third party to contract talks in trucking

By David Moberg

**A**S MOST OF THE NATION'S unionized truckers and dockworkers watch their representatives head to the bargaining table this fall, they are not looking forward to their usual hefty wage and benefit increases. They will be lucky if they hold their own against employers who are likely to be seeking major concessions—wage cuts, reduction in cost-of-living protection and elimination of work rules that give workers a modicum of control over their jobs.

The Teamster talks may thus be a har-

these industries—some of which were in a near-catatonic state even before the current recession took hold—will have greatly diminished bargaining clout.

Last year the troubled trucking industry asked the Teamsters to reopen the Master Freight Agreement, which expires next April 1. Although the Teamsters refused then, many individual companies began pressing for and winning givebacks from their employees, thus undercutting the national agreement that theoretically sets uniform standards for up to 300,000 workers in trucking and warehousing. When the employer organization representing roughly three-fourths of the industry, Trucking Management, Inc., (TMI) once again solicited reopening of the contract this fall, the new Teamster president, Roy Williams, agreed.

With as many as 12,000 certified firms,

industry. Now with the beginnings of deregulation and with desperate competition engendered by a dismal economy, there is even less uniformity.

Although Teamsters and executives alike blame deregulation for their mutual but different woes, the fundamental problem has been low demand for trucking. Truck tonnage plummeted from its peak in the spring of 1979 to a low point in the summer of 1980 that was barely above the depths of the 1975 recession. Since then there's been only slight improvement, largely because of the depressed housing and auto industries that normally account for about 10 percent of all goods moved by truck. High fixed operating costs, worsened by the stratospheric interest rates, squeeze profits quickly when volume falls.

### An offer they can't refuse.

Though trucking generally has returned only 9 to 10 percent on investment in the past two years, such figures obscure an important part of the story. The industry is going through a ruthless "shake-out." While some well-established firms as well as small operators are going bankrupt, other big, modern operations are making well over 20 percent on their stockholders' investment.

Generally, the most profitable area is that increasingly dominated by a few firms that have spread nationwide from their regional origins—Roadway, Consolidated Freightways, or Yellow Freight, for example. These firms tend to specialize in less-than-truckload (LTL) freight shipments. They command a higher rate than truckloads of basic commodities and benefit from large size and sophisticated planning of shipments. On the other hand, it is relatively easy to enter the truckload freight field; consequently there is more competition and the union is weaker in that sector. Increasingly, the big firms are squeezing out the small and medium firms from LTL freight, often using deep discounts that observers like stock analyst William Legg frankly label "predatory" as a way of knocking out much competition once and for all.

Starting in 1980 but accelerating this year, some of the most hard-pressed companies have tried to escape the triple whammy of low volume, cut-throat competition and high interest rates by asking their employees to "loan" the companies anywhere from 7 to 21 percent (most often 15 percent) of their pay with carefully hedged promises to repay without interest if all went well. By this fall, various observers estimate, between 20 and 30 companies had such plans, all theoretically voluntary but actually implemented with increasing levels of compulsion.

Though the contract states that no individual may sign a contract that underbids national standards, the international union and many local officials originally took a hands-off approach, acting as if the "loans" were private affairs as long as the contractual rate was paid. (In some cases, companies also avoided paying the cost-of-living increase due last spring.)

But the wage-cut bandwagon seems to have been braked by a decision by the joint union-industry national grievance committee last month, which ruled against such a plan at Jones Freight, a medium-sized firm headquartered in Pennsylvania and owned by the Allegheny Corp. Soon afterward Allegheny shut down all but the steelhauling part of Jones, throwing 2,800 truckers out of work.

At a time when the Teamsters calculate that around 22 percent of truckers and dockworkers are unemployed (somewhere between 90,000 and 117,000 according to the union's research department), workers are tempted to save their jobs by making concessions. But Thomas Jennings, an attorney for a Teamster local that joined the grievance against Jones, said, "Everyone realized that what they were doing was undermining the whole collective bargaining process. If Jones could do it, everyone could do it, and then Jones would lose its competitive advantage and they'd have to cut more." Moreover, Jennings argued, Jones for many years has had a constantly fluctuating top management that "couldn't make up their minds if they were fish or fowl, whether they wanted to expand or

IN THESE TIMES NOVEMBER 18-24, 1981 7 contract. To a large degree, they had management problems."

### Kentucky Fried Teamsters.

Trucking companies have also been pushing for and getting concessions on work rules and local practices, and in some cases local unions have reportedly been bidding against each other with promises of undercutting the contract. Bill Slater, a carhauler in Oakland, Calif., noted that his company recently cut in half the offi-



## Many Teamster locals believe that undercutting the contract is the only way to save jobs.

cial mileage for a standard route. "They feel the time is right, and they can get away with it," he said, "and the grievance committee is so weak. But what can the union do? It's like fighting a bear with a switch. You'd have to wildcat, and then there are 100 drivers waiting for the jobs."

"Lack of uniformity in contracts has let one business agent or local bid for business against others," John Torbet, recording secretary of Oakland Local 468 said. "These Teamster locals tend to think of their characters not as for a union but as a franchise to run a local business. I call them 'Kentucky Fried Teamsters.' These people are so anxious for the dues money they'll do anything to get operators to move into their area. I caught one business agent soliciting my company to move drivers to his area, saying, 'You won't have any problems here.' That means he won't enforce the contract."

But failure to enforce the contract and lack of a strongly union-conscious mem-

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binge of a round of heavy bargaining in the coming year in many fields—particularly auto, rubber and municipal services—where unions will face tough demands for concessions by their employers. In trucking as well as in many other industries, there are already signs of frayed contracts as local unions are bludgeoned with threats of job loss or plant shutdowns to grant employers cheaper labor and more managerial control. With the unemployment rate up to 8 percent and even likely to pass the 1975 record for the worst joblessness since the great depression, workers in many of



trucking has been much less stable and uniform than more concentrated industries. In the past, regulation by the Interstate Commerce Commission and the National Master Freight Agreement (NMFA) that was first established in 1964 provided some common foundation. But the NMFA has been poked full of loopholes almost from its inception, and its enforcement quickly declined as non-union trucking took a larger slice of the



# Truckers

Continued from page 7

bership has made it more difficult for the Teamsters to organize the growing non-union firms or to resist contract erosion where the union exists, many critics, especially from the ranks of the Teamsters for a Democratic Union, maintain.

"The Teamsters are leading a paper army," Slater says. "How do they put some stiffness in that paper?" One TDU organizer argues, "The union has a problem in organizing, but it's not based on companies not being able to pay. People feel the contract hasn't been enforced since 1970, and they think, 'If I can get fired easily with a union, I might as well get fired without a union.'"

## A divided industry.

Formal negotiations on the new contract start December 1, but the union and TMI already have begun exchanging proposals. The Teamsters have said that job security is tops on their list, but many of-

ficials have already indicated that they are willing to make significant concessions on money and probably work rules as well. It now appears unlikely that a new contract will be signed much in advance of the March 31 expiration, especially since many of the local union contract meetings indicated little willingness to give up existing protection even if few gains are expected.

The companies are expected to ask for rollbacks as a starting point, but they may have difficulty reaching agreement among themselves, given their widely differing conditions. The bigger companies, which dominate the 284-member TMI, are more likely to strike compromises that they can afford on wages while stressing work-rule concessions. Smaller companies may be more aggressive, and enough may break away from TMI—the latest consolidation of an always-unstable industry coalition—to lead more militant fights for rollbacks.

At one of the early TMI-Teamster meetings, Arthur Imperatore, president of APA Transport, a 1,400-worker firm described by one industry source as "probably the most efficient firm in the country," said that he called for a wage

rollback even though "I frankly don't think there will be one." "I would hope there would be zero in wages and zero in fringes plus relief," he said. "We need relief on productivity, flexibility and many conditions imposed by the national master agreement that puts no money in anyone's pocket but costs us lots of money. You need to run trucks as God made them to be run. They're a flexible mode of transportation. When you curtail flexibility, you raise costs. The big problem is productivity. The men have to earn their keep, and they don't. There are many people in the industry who shouldn't be there."

Despite Imperatore's complaints on "ruinous" Teamster contracts, his firm earned 17.5 percent on its investment in the most recent quarters, a couple points above the average for all U.S. industry. His arguments for flexibility and productivity clearly translate into truckers' biggest fear: fewer jobs.

Imperatore has broken with TMI, figuring he can get a better deal on his own end and, at the same time, stiffen the TMI insistence on Teamster concessions. "I think we can be more persuasive to our own local unions, who are concerned

that their own employees have jobs," he said. "I feel we can help the industry more by being outside the big group."

## A rock and a hard spot.

When nearly 500 members of the Teamsters for a Democratic Union met for their sixth convention at the end of October, the members covered by the master freight agreement agreed that the major employer demands were likely to include a wage freeze, a revision of the cost-of-living adjustment (which now recovers only about 71.5 percent of earnings lost to inflation), a possible allocation of some COLA money to health and welfare or pension funds and changes in work rules, such as having longhaul drivers deliver directly to a destination rather than to city terminals as they now do. There has also been talk of a "two-tier" contract, although it is unclear precisely how the industry would be divided. Profitable companies are unlikely to want to give any weak competitors a break to help them survive and compete.

TDU agreed to fight for a uniform contract, a COLA formula that would give full inflation protection and pension improvements. They wanted job security through control of use of casual laborers, preferential hiring of Teamsters laid off by any NMFA company and protection of jobs in mergers or in cases where company sets up a parallel, non-division. They will press for restrictions on the flexible work week (which in many cases means that workers are constantly on call, coming in only when loads arrive, or else work weekends without overtime pay) and stricter contract enforcement, including a return to the pre-1970 rule permitting quickie grievance strikes.

Although TDU probably lacks the power to pressure the union for the improvements it seeks in the contract, it has shown ability in the past to focus and make effective rank-and-file resentment against major concessions.

The Teamsters are put in a tough spot. By enforcing the contract and defending good, uniform conditions for all truckers and dockworkers, they may hasten the demise of some smaller, poorly managed companies. They also encourage union companies, which typically pay about 35 percent less.

## True concessions.

But by making concessions they give non-union drivers little reason to join the Teamsters. They may also do little to save jobs. "What the big carriers want to do is blow the small carriers out and take over the business," Robert Ellerman, a TDU trucker from Southern California says. "Every dollar they save on the contract will go into rate-war discounts" that will further the trend toward concentration. (Concentration offers militants a mixed bag: greater opportunities for stable, high wages but more powerful managements to confront on the job.)

Most TDU members think that some business failures are inevitable and that concessions offer little salvation. "Some shouldn't have been in business to start with," one truck driver said. "I'm a little fatalistic: if you've got gangrene in the arm, you cut it off to save the body." But workers at the threatened companies often take little solace from knowing that their firm's work will be picked up by stronger companies, since they may not get those jobs unless the union can win a guarantee of preferential hiring in the contract.

The key to the big companies' strategy in the near future is flexibility, "and the more they can get, the better," Torbet says. But they want it at the expense of workers rather than through better planning. "Rather than take energy, time and forethought in scheduling, they'd rather have a driver sit on a longer layover," Torbet says. "It's two hours of my time, just because they won't take the energy."

Mike Friedman, a TDU candidate for local office in Cleveland, concludes that the mood this year is sufficiently gloomy that "you could sell a contract that doesn't gain much as long as it doesn't give away much. Given deregulation, some companies will go under, but you can't give away some or all of your contractual protection, because, as the industry improves, then we'll still be paying."

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# IN THE WORLD

## POLAND

# Solidarity rethinks tactics...

By David Ost

W A S H I N G T O N

**O**N NOV. 6 THE "WORKERS' university" of Solidarity's Warsaw region held a large public meeting here to discuss the topic of "tactics of Solidarity." The meeting came at a crucial juncture in the union's 15-month history: The union leadership—or at least a majority of its divided National Committee—has been trying to halt the most serious and widespread wave of strikes since August 1980. At least two entire regions (Tarnobrzeg and Zielona Gora) and one city (Zyrardow) were staging general strikes, and single factories elsewhere would walk out when a single provocation added to a long, general list of grievances. The union's public appeal had gone unheeded, and Lech Walesa had to travel around the country personally trying to quell the strikes with a combination of promises and threats.

For the time being, the union has been able to enforce some discipline. But unless it is able to exact some real changes from the state, particularly in the area of democratic control over distribution of food and other goods, wildcats will begin again as the fierceness of the winter sets in. The state, however, has continued to veto Solidarity's proposal for the establishment of a Social Council of the National Economy, made up of representatives independent of the state and empowered with authority to direct the economy. And it appeared to deal the union another blow when, only one day after Solidarity's appeal to halt the strikes, the government announced that prosecutors were considering legal action against union leader Marian Jurczyk for remarks made at a union rally.

Now words of hope come from the meeting of the "big three"—General Jaruzelski, Walesa and Roman Catholic prelate Glemp. But as the crisis drags on, words alone have less and less impact.

A temporary halt to the strikes and a return to the untenable status quo has thus made the discussion of tactics a crucial internal question for the union. At the Nov. 6 meeting, many speakers criti-

cized past union actions, particularly Solidarity's allegedly one-sided compromises with the authorities in which it has given up key demands in return for unfulfilled promises. But above all the meeting was devoted to working out a strategy for the future.

### The roads not taken.

Jadwiga Staniszkis, a sociology professor at Warsaw University and a key Solidarity advisor since the Gdansk strike, opened up the discussion with a survey of the union's tactics so far. There had, she noted, proven to be three alternatives for union activity on the job: The union could demand "control" (in the European sense, meaning only a check on the actions of the directors); it could settle for cooperation in decision making; or it could insist on making the decisions themselves. The third alternative, she explained, means taking power in the factories—something the union is not ready to do. The choice of control, she dis-

missed as "absurd" since it would mean little more than giving the status quo a union blessing.

The union, she continued, has essentially opted for the path of cooperation in decision making. This has been the basis for negotiation—with the vice-ministry, with the working committees of the ministries, even with the ministers themselves. But now, Staniszkis argued, it has become clear that this path, too, has become "an illusion." "We have been negotiating with people who themselves are powerless." In Staniszkis's view, there is no future in continuing this road, and the union must seek some new, as-yet-unexplored approach. In concluding, she pointed to the "active strike" (*strajk czynny*) as one such alternative.

The most significant development in Poland today is the reconceptualization of the strike as a tactic. There are a dwindling number of people in positions of authority in the union who view the traditional work stoppage as the key to

Solidarity's future successes. But the growing consensus is that, in the present acute stage of the national economic crisis, the traditional strike that simply halts production, with the workers, moreover, demanding full payment of wages, is no longer a viable strategy. (Some of these problems are discussed in a recent article by Zbigniew Boguslawski in the uncensored Warsaw daily, *News of the Day*.)

On the local level, the strike is seen as inadequate because it confronts not a single capitalist employer, who might really suffer from the work stoppage, but a "super-employer"—the state, which is too big to suffer. And in the current conditions of crisis, the withholding of labor doesn't directly hit at the state authorities. Rather, it "hits society, hits all working people and, finally and most acutely, it hits the strikers themselves," especially when—as has been happening more often—they are denied their wages by the authorities, who claim the strike had a "political" character.

Moreover, the traditional work stoppage is deemed inadequate because it lacks a constructive vision of the future. Solidarity in the shipyards is one thing, but somebody must produce the goods. At a time when the state so tragically lacks any

*Continued on page 22*

*Miners in Silesia have pioneered the "active strike," in which union members stay on the job and take control of both work and the distribution of their product.*



## ...as U.S. support rallies

**NEW YORK**—Representatives of the American left sent a message of support to the Polish trade union Solidarity Nov. 8 at a rally here that kicked off what organizers hope will become a continuing "Solidarity Support Campaign."

"How many times have we heard President Reagan and Secretary Haig loudly applaud the Polish workers," said the campaign's organizing statement. "But we Americans who fight for social justice... believe the Solidarity movement projects our vision of a society run democratically for the common good."

A dozen speakers—union leaders, feminists, intellectuals and others—addressed a crowd of about 500 in a high school auditorium near Union Square. Many offered public thanks to Solidarity for, as one speaker said, "holding out the promise of an alternative to the bureaucratic communism of the Soviet Union and the corporate capitalism of the United States."

Among them was Polish economist Tadeusz Kowalik, a frequent advisor to the union, who said that in the begin-

ning Solidarity "was interpreted as a threat to the Soviet Union, and thus easily understood as an anti-socialist movement. But for me the biggest surprise was how many people in this movement were attached to socialist values, though not to the socialist vocabulary."

Kowalik described the union's push to get rid of a centralized bureaucratically managed system. "In my opinion this backlash goes too far, but it is deeply rooted in a tradition of Polish socialism," he said, citing Polish thinkers who have warned against the "state-ization" of social and economic life. "Western public opinion should be better informed about what is going on in Poland—not only at the top, but also in the factories and the universities."

Michael Harrington, chairman of the Democratic Socialist Organizing Committee (DSOC), criticized leftists who disparage aspects of Solidarity's philosophy. "Socialism is not state control of the means of production," he said. "Socialism is control of a society by the people from the bottom up, and that is what is happening in Poland. Hymns to

the Blessed Virgin Mary..., when sung by those workers, become revolutionary anthems."

Union speakers at the rally included Bruce Campbell of the Professional Air Traffic Controllers (PATCO); Sam Meyers, president of United Auto Workers Local 259 in New York; and Pete Camarata, member of the Teamsters for a Democratic Union and the dissident group's candidate for president of the Teamsters at the union's convention in Las Vegas last spring. "I hope the message goes back to Poland that there are dissidents here in the U.S. working for the same thing," Camarata said.

Author Grace Paley noted that Solidarity's landmark 21 demands of August 1980 included gains for women—a three-year maternity leave and day care for working mothers—but expressed fear that as compromise becomes necessary, "compromises will fall heavily on the backs of women"—particularly in light of the union's closeness to the Catholic church. Barbara Garson, also an author, said she didn't know what compromises will come about or what economic reforms must be instituted, "but I've seen a change in the expression on people's faces in Poland."

C.L.R. James, an elderly West Indian intellectual, saw the developments

in Poland as a natural evolution of socialism. He predicted a mass movement in South Africa next—within his own lifetime—and drew cheers when he predicted an eventual movement in the U.S.

One of the campaign's organizers was Joanne Landy, a New York health activist who visited Poland last summer. She said the idea for the rally sprang from conversations among a group of acquaintances who wanted to model a Solidarity support organization after similar groups that have sprung up in France, Canada and Belgium. In her talk to the crowd Landy spoke of meeting with workers in a Warsaw steel mill and learning how deeply Solidarity is felt at the factory level, where workers can now speak their minds and shape their working lives. Solidarity has been an inspiration to activists here in the U.S., she said, "and I think the best way we can pay our debt to this movement is to show the world that America is not a monolith, not a cold war monster, not just the Reagan administration."

—Michael Hoyt & Mary Ellen Schoonmaker  
Michael Hoyt has written for several national publications, including *American Lawyer* and *New Times*. Mary Ellen Schoonmaker is a reporter with the *Record in Bergen County, N.J.*



By Alan Lupo

BOSTON

SIXTEEN YEARS AGO, WHEN I met him, Andreas Papandreu was a man on the run, a politician not working the streets to shake hands with the people, but living in seclusion and available only to reporters cleared ahead of time by trusted intermediaries. The man had cause to behave this way. He later ended up in prison on orders of the Greek military junta. On Oct. 18 he became his nation's prime minister.

One American newspaper in search of a catchy and relevant headline, came up with, "Greece elects anti-U.S. chief." It was catchy, but inaccurate. Papandreu is for the U.S. as much as he is against it, his position depending on either the issue at hand or his political instincts.

Papandreu is difficult to figure out because he is both a Greek and an American. He has exhorted crowds from the balconies overlooking public squares in Athens, and he has worked the precincts of Minnesota for Adlai Stevenson and Hubert Humphrey. The man who studied at Harvard, taught at Berkeley, and hobnobbed with America's liberal economists apparently goes over very big in the bleak and desolate mountain villages of northern Greece.

Even in 1965, when the fates seemed to have put the kibosh on Papandreu's political hopes, descriptions of the man depended on who gave them. He was, some insisted, a dangerous left-winger who made deals with communists and plotted to turn Greece into a socialist state. No, insisted others, Andreas was just a politically ambitious, albeit naive, fellow who angered powerful politicians by trying to ride into power on the popularity of his father, George, who had thrice been prime minister (once in exile during World War II). To admirers, Andreas was a liberal economist thoroughly committed to democracy.

For some Greeks of the left, right, or middle, he was "too American." For the U.S. government, he was—and probably still is—distrusted for his anti-American remarks and his leftist tendencies. "Most of my thinking has been shaped in the United States," he said in a long interview years ago. But in that same interview, he also insisted—as he still does—that Greece cannot be merely a satellite of U.S. policy, that "a Greek has to see things from a Greek point of view."

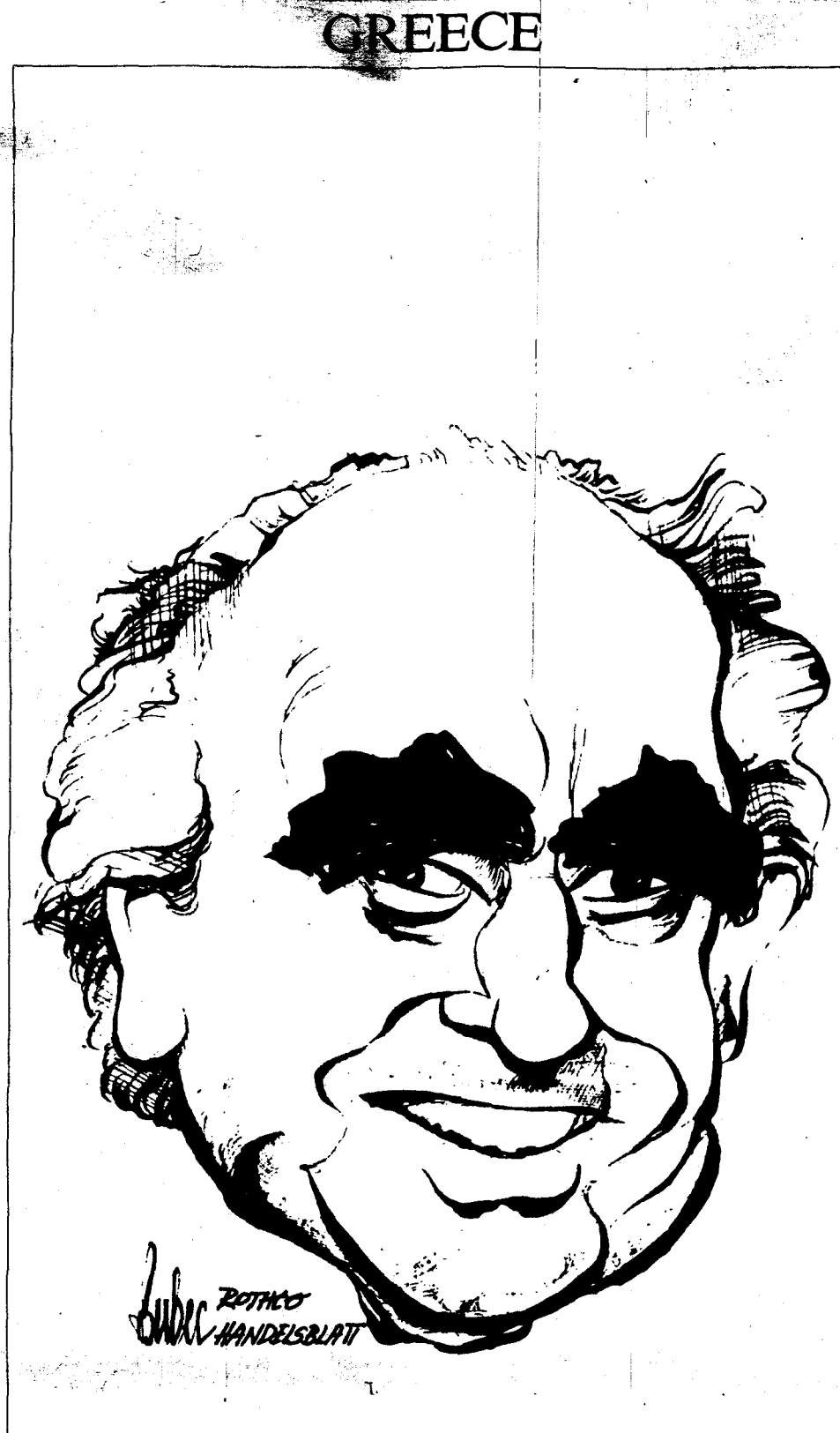
Papandreu's point of view is shared by a lot of Greeks, not all of them left-wingers. It is that since World War II the U.S. State Department and CIA have exercised too much influence in Greek politics. They're convinced that should historic Greek-Turkish antagonisms flare up on Cyprus or anywhere else, the U.S. will favor Turkey as strategically more important.

Papandreu's Panhellenic Socialist Movement raised such issues in its recent campaign and succeeded in winning 48 percent of the popular vote and a healthy majority in parliament. But when Papandreu is pressed for specifics, he behaves now much as he did in 1965, which is to say that he does not sound so strident in private as he does in public.

Pull Greece out of NATO? Well, he allows, there are some details to talk about, and it's an open question. Close down U.S. bases? Possibly, but certainly not right away. Drop out of the European Common Market? Well, of course that's something that only a referendum could decide, and only the nation's president, Constantine Caramanlis, can call a referendum, and Caramanlis isn't about to do so, but maybe some details could be renegotiated a bit. This is hardly the stuff of which "anti-U.S. chief" headlines are made.

#### The seeds of moderation.

Unless Papandreu has a radical bomb-thrower's personality that will emerge only with his assumption of power, he is somewhat like the politicians he witnessed during his time in America. He was dispatched there by his father in the late 1930s after being arrested and temporarily detained for plotting the overthrow of the Metaxas dictatorship. He got his doctorate in economics at Harvard, joined the U.S. Navy in 1944 and became an



The new prime minister has been criticized by some Greeks as "too American," while the U.S. distrusts his leftist tendencies.

## Papandreu: how he looks depends on where you stand

American citizen. He married an American, taught economics, dabbled in politics in Minnesota and, in 1954, was named chairman of the economics department at Berkeley.

Unlike most Greeks his age, he missed both the guerrilla warfare against the Nazis and Bulgarians and the subsequent bloody civil war between communist guerrillas and U.S.-backed guerrillas. The anti-communists emerged victorious in 1949 to take over a nation in shambles and an economy in ruin; Greece was, in effect, a ward of the U.S. By the late 1950s, under the conservative government of then-prime minister Caramanlis, Greece was more stable economically and a staunch NATO ally.

In 1960, Caramanlis invited Papandreu back home to set up a center for economic research, but Papandreu became "disenchanted" by what he contended was ballot fraud in Caramanlis' 1961 re-election. Though he went back to California, he had returned to Greece by the end of 1963, this time, he said, to stay. A year later, he was elected to parliament from Patras, his father's home village. His father regained the prime minister's seat and, having done so, handed his son an important cabinet post.

Young Papandreu was the moving force behind a new economic policy that increased price support for farmers,

expanded social services, raised the pay of public servants and instituted free education through the university level. This program was hardly socialist, and just a bit more liberal than the Caramanlis policies, but Papandreu became a handy target. To his critics, he was an upstart being groomed by his father for a powerful position that he didn't deserve. He had not fought the Nazis or their Bulgarian puppets in the mountains, nor had he done battle with the communist guerrillas. He was, they charged, an American who didn't understand his own country.

Both his friends and critics said he overreacted to this criticism. "He was accused of being a U.S. stooge, and he had to prove otherwise," one said. U.S. officials, at first delighted to see the Harvard grad in Greece's government, became cool toward him and saw him as "an opportunist trying to twist the U.S. tail."

"First I was attacked as being a United States agent," Panandreu commented in 1965. "Then I was called a leftist. But I'm a center man through and through. Perhaps a progressive-style economic policy gives the impression that I'm 'left.' Or perhaps it was the issues I raised in connection with the allies. There are certain fundamental questions [regarding Greece-U.S. relations] that are considered unwise to raise unless you belong to the left. But it's just as unwise to leave

the left with a monopoly on being nationalistic."

What's considered "left" by Americans is not necessarily what's considered "left" by much of the rest of the world. What the U.S. might have seen as leftist thinking, Papandreu saw as "progressive." What the U.S. saw as a "stable" Greek military, Papandreu saw as an institution overly influenced by right-wingers. By 1965, Greek politics was following its old tendency to polarize between "left" and "right" postures.

#### Taming the generals.

When rumors circulated that George Papandreu planned staff changes in the army, the army responded with allegations of a secret plot by left-wing officers to destroy the monarchy and replace it with a socialist government. The alleged secret organization was called ASPIDA, or "Shield," and supposedly involved none other than Andreas. He denied the charges.

The elder Papandreu subsequently resigned when King Constantine refused to let him be both defense minister and prime minister. Critics charged that the old man was trying to protect his son; the son insisted in that 1965 interview, "The army was beyond the government's reach. And when we tried to reach it by changing a general or an administrator, we found that we were forced to resign."

A patchwork coalition then pretended to run the nation for two years, until the military junta took over in 1967 and stifled democracy in its very birthplace for seven years. When elections were restored in 1974, the moderates and conservatives returned to power, first under Caramanlis and later under George Rallis, whom Andreas Papandreu defeated last week.

When the military took power, it arrested Andreas and charged him with high treason. Ironically, the man who criticized the U.S. for "heavy-handed meddling" in Greece's political affairs may have escaped execution through U.S. intervention. After his arrest, many U.S. economists sent telegrams to the State Department on his behalf, and John Kenneth Galbraith was reported to have personally asked the White House to ensure Papandreu's safety.

Papandreu traveled abroad, where he was welcomed at the homes and forums of progressives. He returned in 1974 to found the opposition Panhellenic Socialist Movement.

This movement is now the party in power—not just in power, but secure enough not to need the few communist deputies for a coalition. A turn to communism is not what has worried Papandreu's more mature American critics. They fear, rather, that he'll pursue an independent course in the style of the non-aligned nations.

One fear, probably justified, is that Papandreu may force the U.S. into making difficult choices between Greece's interests and those of Turkey. Greece's legitimate historical differences with Turkey will not disappear just because the U.S. regards both nations as allies against the Soviet Union. Papandreu could use the threat of closing down bases or pulling out of NATO to pressure the U.S. into paying more attention to the Greek side of that ancient dispute.

Papandreu's socialism could be more a creature of political convenience than a deeply held set of beliefs. What's more significant is that independent streak of his. Independence is a very pragmatic course these days in Europe, as France goes Socialist, Poland goes Solidarity, and thousands of young people across the continent go to the streets.

The times, then, may be right for Papandreu. And at age 62, he may have his own timing down just right, too. He admitted long ago that when he started in politics, "I was a little bit naive." Since he left his father's cabinet in 1965, Andreas Papandreu has had 16 years to hone his instincts and develop political maturity. That's a long wait, and, in the parlance of Americans who exposed him to politics here, you can mend a lot of fences in a lot of precincts in 16 years.

Alan Lupo is a staff writer for the Boston Phoenix, in which this article first appeared.



## EUROPE



SDP leader Willy Brandt (left) sat down with Francois Mitterrand (right) to explain his position on the NATO weapons—but they were talking different languages.

# France has its own agenda

By Diana Johnstone

PARIS

**T**HE EUROPEAN LEFT FEELS sadly let down, puzzled and exasperated by the French. The most left-wing government in Western Europe, headed by Socialist Francois Mitterrand, has staunchly supported the Reagan administration's determination to thrust Pershing II and Cruise nuclear missiles on ever more reluctant NATO allies. Only France is as yet scarcely touched by the massive popular movement against nuclear weapons sweeping the rest of Europe.

There is disappointment, even shock, at hearing French Socialist leaders condemn the growing peace movement as "neutralist" and "defeatist"—a movement that in northern Europe is led, or at least followed, by Socialists, and whose objectives are in line with Socialist International policy for reducing nuclear arms in Europe.

"If I condemn neutralism, it's because I believe that peace is tied to a world balance of forces," Mitterrand told the West German weekly *Stern* in July. The French president seems to have wholly accepted the questionable allegation that deployment of Soviet SS20 nuclear missiles has upset the balance and that Soviet-American negotiations should begin only after the U.S. has restored it by deploying additional missiles starting in 1983.

It did not seem to occur to Mitterrand 1) that the real aim of the Reagan administration might be superiority, not "balance," or 2) that the Russians might meanwhile come up with yet another weapon of their own, which is what the "arms race" is all about. Mitterrand's statement seemed more hawkish than the now hotly-contested NATO "double decision" of December 1979, which combined missile deployment plans with a call for Soviet-American arms limitation talks that might make it possible to call the whole thing off.

In August, Willy Brandt sat down over a long lunch to try to explain German feelings to his friend Francois Mitterrand. According to Brandt's own account, leaked to the weekly *Der Spiegel*, the food was great but the conversation got nowhere. Brandt tried to explain that the German Social Democratic Party (SPD) wanted the "zero option": NATO should give up the U.S. missiles in return for removal of the Soviet SS20's. But they were speaking different languages. Mitterrand stressed that France needed an even balance between the two blocs so as to be able to concentrate on defending its own territory through nuclear deterrence without having to get involved in

the defense of Germany.

If German socialists are disappointed, Spanish socialists are furious. What made them most angry was French foreign minister Claude Cheysson's advice to Spain to join NATO. Felipe Gonzalez snapped back that Cheysson could join NATO himself (France was taken out of NATO, that is the integrated military organization, by de Gaulle, although remaining in the Atlantic Alliance) "and then show the same eagerness in letting us into the Common Market."

## The benefit of the doubt.

Support for Reagan's arms race is in flagrant contradiction to the French Socialist government's domestic social programs, not to mention its fervent calls for third world development. Some people, especially on the left-wing of the French Socialist Party, suggest, or want to believe, that the extremely pro-NATO stance is temporary and tactical—a way of calming American apprehensions over Communists in the French government and other domestic audacities.

From a left viewpoint, this explanation increasingly seems too good to be true. But at least it points up the main difficulty in analyzing anybody's foreign policy: it is by its nature the most secretive part of public affairs. In foreign policy, all governments habitually deceive and manipulate their own populations the better to deceive and manipulate foreign governments. Elaborately created illusions are often dispelled only much later, by historians, if ever. Many of the most politicized people on the French left are acutely aware of this, and thus are slow to pass judgment on a government they basically support when the issue involved is so obscure and complicated.

French distrust of the current European peace movement is fed by memories of Munich, of Vichy (supported at the time by pacifists for having made peace), and of the Communist-led peace movement of the 1950s, which in retrospect looks falsely alarmist and servile to Moscow. Today, the movement is led in France by the Communist Party (PCF) and in Europe by Germans—another cause for distrust. The French, oddly enough, do not pay much more attention to Germany than Americans do, and French leftists still have a tendency to think of all Germans as potential Nazis.

For the moment, the issue, largely neglected by the French press, has fallen into the hands of the PCF, which shows no sign of seriously trying to educate the public and seems to want to use the issue mainly to attract young people. The PCF is in a quandary over how to project a more militant image than the Socialist Party, without breaking the solidarity

pact with the Socialists that is the basis of PCF participation in the government. Thus it has latched onto a couple of fairly marginal issues, the neutron bomb and Ulster, to appear more radical than Mitterrand in military and foreign policy without actually opposing the government where it counts.

What counts, apparently, is the French nuclear deterrent strike force, which both the Socialists and the Communists came around to supporting in 1977 after years of opposition. Partly to woo the moderate wing of the military establishment, the French left parties bought the Gaullist theory that a medium-sized nuclear strike force was the best (and cheapest) defense for a medium-sized country, since it could inflict damage equal to any gains a potential aggressor might hope for by invading France.

The neutron bomb, as a battlefield weapon belonging to graduated-response strategies for limited nuclear war, would obviously undermine the theoretical punch of the French nuclear deterrent, which depends on an all-or-nothing conception of atomic war. Thus PCF opposition to the neutron bomb has nothing to do with systematic opposition to nuclear weapons, but amounts to an indirect defense of the French nuclear deterrent.

The French nuclear strike force is a potential target for the SS20s. But the Pershing II missiles, scheduled to be deployed in West Germany only, are an even better target, since their proximity to Kremlin targets makes them the number one potential first-strike weapons. This is precisely why the Germans don't want them.

But the French may figure that their interest is to get the SS20s removed without having to sacrifice any of their own nuclear strike force. A trade-off between Soviet and American missiles, leaving French missiles untouched, could be jeopardized if the American missiles are eliminated first by Western European public opinion.

The French position is that nuclear arms reduction, at first and for a long time to come, concerns the over-armed superpowers, not France, which has just what it needs in the way of deterrence and no more. The French can imagine the superpowers getting together over a disarmament agreement—to disarm the French.

## Global strategies.

French leaders may have other perception of their national interest that separate them from their Socialist friends in Germany or in Spain. Willy Brandt is not alone in detecting in Mitterrand an underlying fear of German reunification. If Central Europe were demilitarized and neutralized—if the two Germanies were

no longer enrolled in the front lines of two irretrievably hostile military blocs—the chances are great that a more or less loosely reunited socialist Germany would emerge in Central Europe. Even if armed only with slingshots, such a Germany would, through its great economic and technological capacity, exercise tremendous influence in the third world.

Socialist or not, France may prefer to go it alone in Europe, maintaining its traditional third world sphere of influence in the shadow of United States global power, rather than risk having to compete with Germany. The temptation may be all the greater in that the U.S. seems more and more politically incompetent in its dealings with the third world. Could France fill the void?

Here we come back to the Spanish anger. The most fundamental reason for the Spanish Socialists—and Communists—objections to joining NATO are not East-West, but North-South. The U.S. is transforming NATO into a base for military operations in the Middle East

## The French can imagine the superpowers reaching an agreement on disarmament—to disarm the French.

and Africa. Joining NATO ruins Spain's ambitions to construct fruitful independent relations with the third world. Trapped in NATO, Spain, Germany and Italy will be implicated in whatever U.S. moves in the Middle East or elsewhere enrage and further alienate third world opinion.

Such are the factors jostling each other for consideration in the minds of those who govern. If America (judging by certain polls) thinks the world is on the verge of war, France is likelier to think the world is on the verge of major negotiations. Saber-rattling is a traditional preface to both activities. Europe in particular is entering a phase of intense diplomatic activity. In such a period, official words and gestures rarely mean exactly what they seem at first glance.

Meanwhile, the contagion of the nuclear disarmament movement is likely to be brought to France by people like Claude Bourdet, who are outside both the left governing parties. As Bourdet has said, "the French Socialists and Communists do not realize what the Carl von Weizacker group in West Germany has well established: that you cannot defend a country like France or Germany by nuclear means. You can just destroy it, annihilate it." French, who pride themselves on their logical reasoning, cannot ignore this simple logic much longer. ■



**W**HAT WERE THEY GOING TO DO with the Brink's money? Buy guns? They were already spectacularly armed, better than the police. Send it abroad to some liberation struggle, to SWAPO or ZANU in Africa? Or devote the money to the expenses of living underground? Both of the women in the holdup have babies. There were safe houses to keep up.

In any case, why raise the money this way? Did they say to themselves, "I will do *almost* anything to get a lot of money. But not go straight. Not apply to dad. Not go to law school. Murder, however, is acceptable." Of course maybe they needed the money immediately. But for what?

No doubt more than money was at stake. Perhaps building the revolutionary army, or forging black-white unity through armed struggle. Or was it heroic self-image?

And the brutality; they killed guard Peter Paige with a shotgun. Two of them blasted shotguns through the armored car windshield and wounded another guard in the head. A gunman sprayed the inside of the truck with bullets and wounded the third guard. They killed policemen Waverly Brown and Edward O'Grady with a barrage of firepower from automatic weapons. They superficially wounded a third policeman.

And what to make of Kathy Boudin? Here was a woman who had been present at the accidental bomb death of three of her comrades 11 years before, and had barely escaped herself. She had done god knows what since then. Now she had participated, though maybe not by pulling the trigger, in the murder of three men and the wounding of three others. Koch ran up to her with his badge and his gun, uncertain of who she was. And she said, according to the *New York Times*, "I didn't shoot him, he did!"

Of course we don't know if this was actually said. But it is not impossible to imagine. Panic is involuntary. A person in terror cannot control what bubbles from the lips. The words come from the bottom of the belly. It is a moment of truth. And so she very likely did say, "I didn't shoot him, he did," or "The others did," and "Please don't shoot," and officer Koch didn't shoot. *He* was cool.

Botched, irrational, brutal, self-tormented—whatever road led to this place was long and miserable.



**A bunch of barbarians.**

When Marx wrote that history repeats itself, the first time as tragedy, the second time as farce, he was referring to the tendency of revolutionaries to reenact the past, even reworking the old formula that worked long ago. No one would say that history has repeated itself as farce this time. The tragedy grows deeper day by day. But the phenomenon is what Marx described, the ghastly decline from grand and noble to pointless and stupid.

For the white radicals at Nanuet, history the first time was the student insurrection of 1968—not merely the fact of these uprisings but the way in which they took place. At a school like Columbia, opposition to the Vietnam war and to racial injustice was widespread but tepid.

The university was up to its neck in Defense Department contracts in a time when thousands were dying in Vietnam every week, and was planning further discrimination against the people of Harlem—yet campus protest remained polite and subdued. Then a bunch of barbarians headed by Mark Rudd were selected to replace the scholarly leaders of SDS. The barbarians shocked everyone by announcing that the time for polite subdued protest was over. The barbarians threw pies at army recruiters, seized speaking platforms at public meetings, heckled bitterly and obscenely—and a thrill passed through the dorms.

The barbarians were right. They were the only morally defensible people in sight. Their courage was inspiring. Legitimacy and respect passed from the deans and administration, who had disgraced themselves with lies, to a bunch of 19-year-old action freaks. The strike broke out. Then the white students were further galvanized by the astonishing militance of the black students. Ultimately New York's Finest arrived and covered the quads with blood. That is not insignificant. Police violence runs like a red thread through this story.

The events at Columbia were repeated

elsewhere. Bold action by a nervy few sparked insurrection by the already outraged many. This was SDS at its peak—and a turning point in the opposition to the war. But this is also the ghost that has been haunting one section of the American left ever since. At Columbia, in the year after the strike, SDS continued to pursue the same barbarian tactics, but now they succeeded only in decimating the student left. Then the Weather Organization was formed to follow the same path, but in an even bolder way.

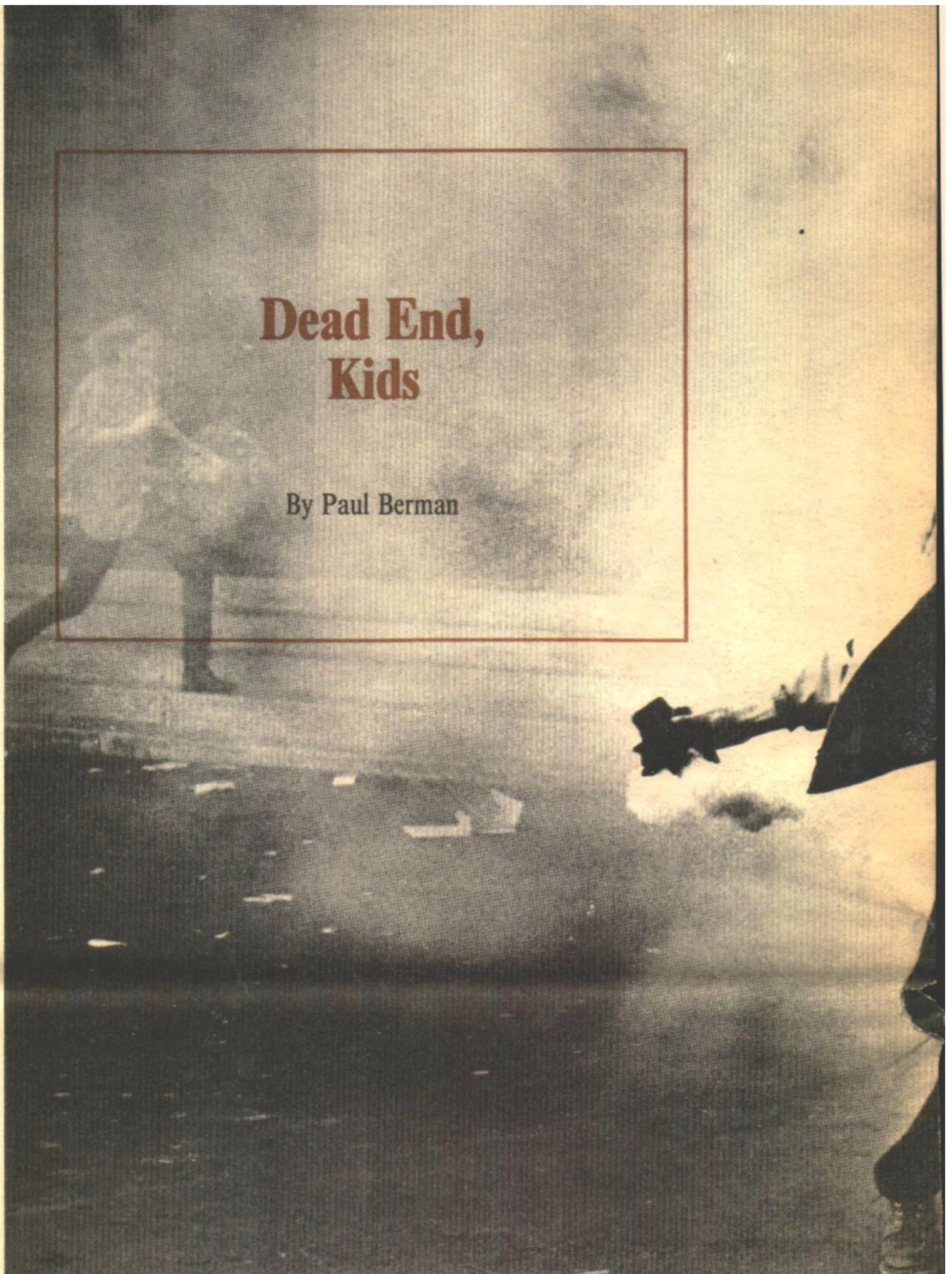
At this point, history had indeed turned into farce. The Weatherpeople (there were hundreds at first) performed mad-cap guerrilla raids. They seized a greasy spoon and harangued the customers until the police arrived, at which point they became the Cheeseburger Red. They ran through schools yelling, "Jailbreak!" They rioted in the streets. They cleverly disguised themselves by dyeing their hair Fire Engine Red. They sang giddy songs such as "We all live in the Weatherman Machine, Weatherman Machine, Weatherman Machine," to the tune of "Yellow Submarine," or "Dupe of Mao" to the tune of "Duke of Earl"; "Dupe, dupe, dupe, dupe of Mao, dupe, dupe. Dupe of Mao, dupe, dupe." Ted Gold was said to have written that lyric. And according to rumor there were a lot of nasty sex orgies and miserable homosexual coming-out agonies. Also a lot of LSD. This was history as hallucination.

None of this came easy. It wasn't easy

for Mark Rudd to stand up and do all those sensational things. It wasn't easy to throw away one's college standing or personal ambitions for a life of revolutionary organizing. The purpose of all those hijinks in the early Weather days was to break down the taboos that stood between a typically gentle middle- or upper-class student and bold action. This took a lot of inner wrestling, as if the greatest of revolutionary acts was to perform surgery on one's own character, to turn oneself into a hero. Not all the surgeries were successful. A lot of damaged souls were thrown to the wayside in this flight to the lunar left. A number of the scholarly former leaders of Columbia SDS, impressed by their own failures and by heroism's successes, flipfopped and joined the Weather Organization, where it seemed to their friends they became the looniest of the loonies. Dave Gilbert was one of these scholarly leaders. Ted Gold was another.

Signs that something had snapped appeared early. The explosion that killed Gold and two others at 11th Street, and from which Kathy Boudin escaped, was not from a conventional bomb but from a bomb filled with nails, a bomb meant to kill people.

The Underground backed off from this. When it began throwing bombs in



## Dead End, Kids

By Paul Berman





Hero worship of black revolutionaries and  
adventurism went together  
in what passed for theory for the  
Weather Underground.



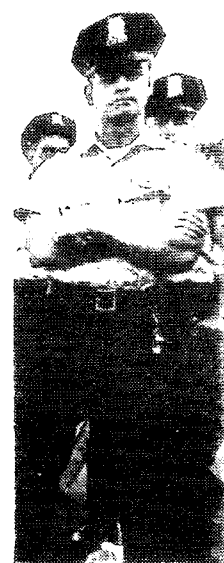
But police brutality  
also runs like a red thread  
through this era.

meanwhile you could deal capitalism a thousand infinitesimal blows. That was keeping up the struggle, even if the theoretical understanding that sustained Boudin and the others was pathetically juvenile. (An ironic indication of the decline in political intelligence represented by Weathermen is the fact that the first genuine landmark of Marxist thought in the U.S. was *The Theoretical System of Karl Marx*, written in 1907 by Kathy's great-uncle, Louis Boudin.)

Of course if the ideology of third worldism and personal nihilism were all that was left to support the old commitment to heroic boldness, the commitment was bound to collapse. And once Nixon was gone, with his grand juries and police provocations, it did collapse. The more levelheaded of the Weatherpeople eventually surfaced and faced charges. To our best knowledge today, the Weather Underground had ceased to exist.

But the possibilities of heroic action had still not been exhausted. They had been exhausted politically, but politics is not everything. Bourgeois society is a society of complacency, cowardice, moral blindness. Maybe the time was gone when you could jump on a table and turn a crowd of timid students into a raging force for liberation. But the struggle to turn yourself into a dynamic, heroic figure could still go on. You could still make yourself into a kind of antistate, the living negation of everything cowardly and frightened in bourgeois society. To become truly heroic, in the logic of the die-hard remnant, you could raise pilferage to the level of banditry, personal nihilism to a level of violence that was no longer symbolic. Run the banner of third worldism to the top of this mast and you really had something. So what if political hopes and the chance for supporters is abandoned? How many supporters do you need? The insurgent peasants of Africa, Asia and Latin America could be your supporters.

On to Nanuet.



earnest, its violence was mostly symbolic. The Underground blew up the statue of the policeman at Haymarket Square in Chicago commemorating the police side of the 1886 labor riot. That was different from blowing up blood-warm police. Even so, by the middle of the '70s many who had once approved of the Weather tendency had shied away as it became increasingly obvious how badly the Underground had damaged the left. By taking the main branch of national SDS underground, the Weatherpeople had ruined whatever chance existed for SDS to evolve into a political movement.

Even so, the Underground bombings were not exactly unpopular on the left. One bomb cracked the walls and ceilings in the Capitol building, another blew out the dust at New York Police Headquarters, and a cheer went up in whole neighborhoods of Manhattan, Cambridge, and Berkeley.

Looking back, it is evident that only two things could have sustained this activity once the passions of '68 and '69 were spent. The first was ideological—the doctrine of third worldism, the idea that socialist revolution is hopeless in Europe and America but is progressing excellently in the third world and that one's main goal ought to be to aid these foreign upheavals. This doesn't have to be a radical idea. It is enough to say that commendable things are going on in third world liberation struggles, and that they deserve a helping hand. The

National Council of Churches has been known to adopt just that position.



Weathering the storm.

But the doctrine proved suitable to the development of the Weather movement. Third world liberation presented a model not only of social progress—after all Sweden presented a model of social progress—but also of heroic action. The Weather underground saw in the third

world exactly the kind of heroic selflessness missing from the middle-class American left.

By extension, third worldism meant support for whatever was flamboyant and heroic in the black struggle in America. The Weather tendency idolized the Black Panthers, George Jackson, Malcolm X—anyone who presented a bold challenge or violent posture. Indeed, it regarded these people as the leaders of the larger revolutionary movement. And indeed, black militants had marched at the head of many political developments in the '60s and '70s. In any case, by doing something to support black revolutionary heroes, or bold guerrillas in the fields, one could sustain an identification with the heroic ideal. That was one way to keep the old ideal alive.

The other way was through pilferage. Anyone who was in the student or youth movement a decade ago will remember heroic shoplifting. If you couldn't be a fearless Vietcong at least you could be a thief. *Steal This Book* was not only a book title but an ethic. It was hard times for shopkeepers. Naturally the connection between shoplifting and social revolution was a bit fuzzy. People came to recognize this as soon as they calmed down or as soon as they got nabbed. But

This brings us to the role of blacks. Very little is known. Samuel Brown has been arrested many times on criminal charges but nothing is known about his politics. For all we know he is of the "I am not a crook" party. The connection between the Nanuet-Nyack robbery and the two gunmen in Queens is merely through a license plate (though another piece of evidence—a spent bullet linking one of the gunmen to the robbery—has turned up). The fact that lines can be drawn from the desperadoes of Rockland County to various other desperadoes may not necessarily mean these other desperadoes were involved. Maybe they merely know one another professionally.

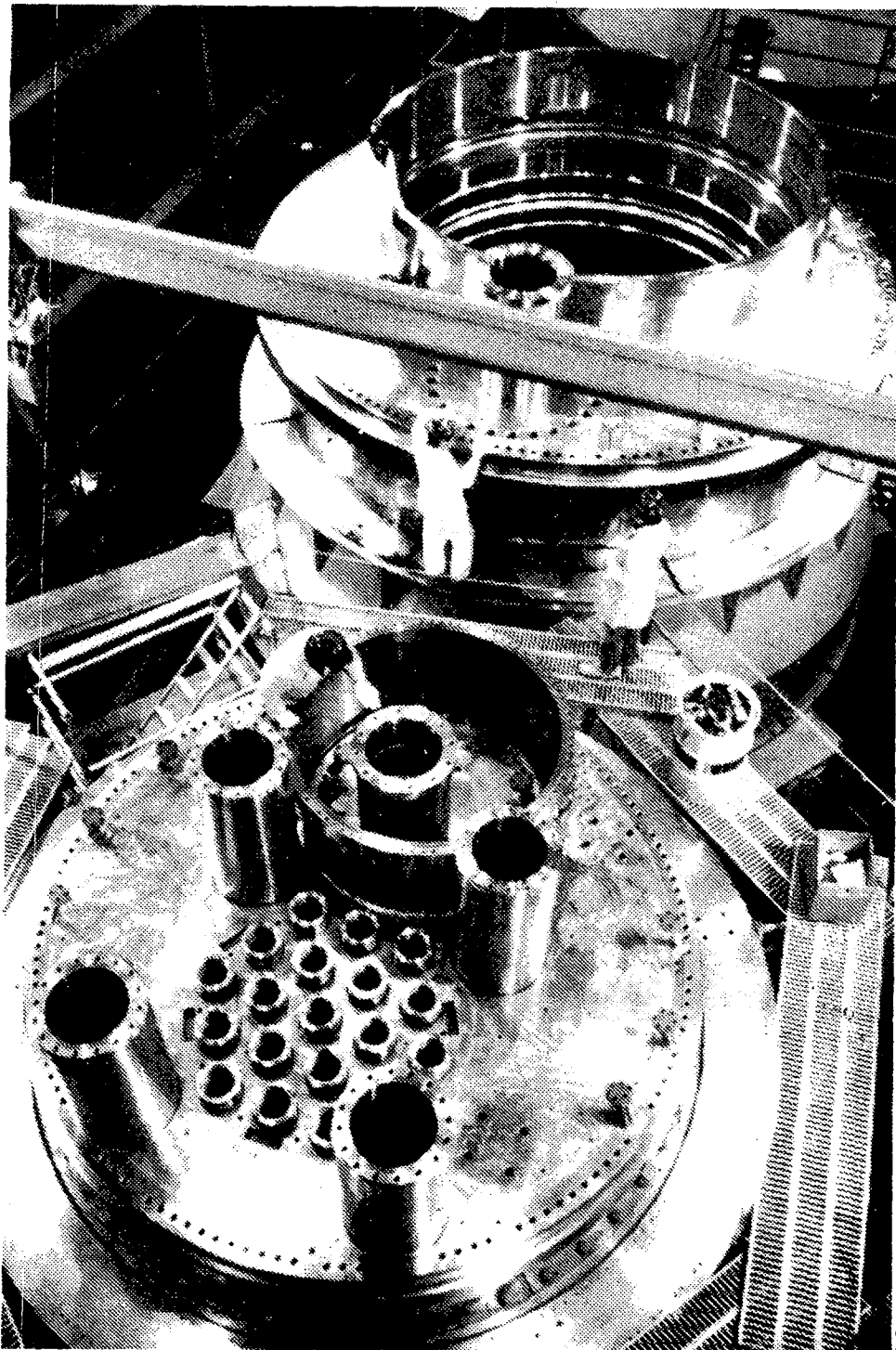
Likewise one must raise an eyebrow at talk of the Black Liberation Army. The BLA existed in the early '70s as an offshoot of the Black Panther Party. But does it actually exist today? Maybe it's a police concoction.

Still, the world spins theories over breakfast and there is no reason not to spin one here. Suppose these hypotheses about BLA involvement are true. A black underground may exist and the information so far does make its involve-

Continued on page 18



## EDITORIAL

*Welfare for a truly needy industry*

Reagan's proposal to go ahead with the Clinch River breeder may be a result of a political debt to Sen. Howard Baker (R-Tenn.), or of the need for more plutonium to fuel all the atomic weapons he is planning to build.

On Oct. 8, the Reagan administration announced its program to attach a life-support system to the terminally ill nuclear power industry. Part of a broader policy that will waste billions of dollars on technological boondoggles while cutting off funds to develop energy sources that might solve the nation's dependence on high-cost oil, the Reagan program is one more example of administration subsidies to giant corporate interests in the name of the "free market."

According to the president, nuclear power has "become entangled in a morass of regulations that do not enhance safety but that do cause licensing delays and economic uncertainty." He asserts that the federal government "has created a regulatory environment that is forcing many utilities to rule out nuclear power as a source of new generating capacity."

But it is the danger to public health and safety and the inherent technological difficulties of nuclear power generation that have driven up the cost of nuclear energy and caused the public to insist on caution. Regulations were adopted to correct deficiencies in nuclear technology as they appeared. Federal regulations for fire prevention at nuclear plants, for example, were developed only after a fire at the Tennessee Valley Authority nuclear plant at Brown's Ferry disabled the control systems of the plant's two operating units and threatened a melt-down in March 1975. Rules requiring upgrading of electrical safety equipment at nuclear plants were enacted after tests show-

ed that existing equipment could not withstand the heat and radiation in the Brown's Ferry accident. Recent reports of rusting steam generators and news that nuclear pressure vessels are being made brittle by radiation suggest that more, not less, regulation is required for the safety of existing plants.

Also, Reagan's nuclear program cannot set market forces free. A history of nuclear power in this country readily illustrates that it is too late for a free market in the whole area of energy because of the tremendous amounts of money required to develop any new sources. As the *Wall Street Journal* reported on March 12, the nuclear power industry exists because of massive federal subsidies over the last three decades. These have amounted to some \$12 billion in direct federal subsidies for nuclear power development and a total of \$37 billion in direct and indirect government subsidies to the industry.

And these subsidies are continuing. The proposal to go ahead with the Clinch River breeder reactor includes a federal subsidy of \$240 million, plus \$500 million allocated for long-term breeder reactor research. In addition, the administration has pledged \$123 million to help pay for cleaning up Three Mile Island, thereby coming to the rescue of the plant's owner, General Public Utilities, while saving hundreds of millions of dollars in additional risk premiums for other utilities constructing nuclear plants (See *In These Times*, Oct. 21).

The Reagan nuclear program also promises to develop government facilities for the disposal of nuclear wastes, which will help solve a costly and embarrassing problem for the industry. They will also be a legal boon. On Oct. 9, a federal appeals court upheld California's moratorium on the construction of nuclear power plants on the grounds that they are "uneconomical" and "uncertain" as an energy source in the absence of safe waste disposal. Creation of waste disposal facilities by the federal government, according to David Berrick of the Environmental Policy Center, would provide support for the industry's contention that the moratorium should be set aside.

Of course, administration officials do not believe their own rhetoric about the free market. One example of this, recently uncovered by Rep. Richard Ottinger (D-N.Y.), is a Department of Energy memo recommending that DOE undertake a \$2 million public relations campaign on behalf of nuclear power. The memo proposed making public appearances to boost nuclear power, giving special interviews to pro-nuclear reporters, hiring ghost writers for articles favorable to the industry and commissioning a study by a trustworthy pro-nuclear organization.

This suggestion of a government propaganda campaign indicates more than a simple interest in a competitive marketplace. The need to return a favor to Senate majority leader Howard Baker (R-Tenn.) may explain administration support for the Clinch River reactor. Administration ties to major nuclear corporations may provide another. Caspar Weinberger, before becoming Secretary of Defense, was vice president of the Bechtel Corporation, the country's largest builder of nuclear reactors.

There may be another consideration behind the government's promotion of breeder reactors. The administration's interest in this area contrasts sharply with its decision to cut some \$10 million to \$20 million of funding for improvements in the efficiency of uranium reactors—which Ottinger says could reduce the need for uranium by 25 percent, save consumers more than \$13 billion by the turn of the century and eliminate the need for breeder reactors and the reprocessing of nuclear fuels.

As Joseph R. Egan explains (see page 6), administration zeal for the breeder reactor and reprocessing may arise from the large amount of plutonium that these processes can produce—plutonium that will be needed for the rapid expansion of our arsenal of nuclear weapons. Department of Energy Secretary James B. Edwards admits that this is a possibility.

#### Toward rationality.

The plain fact is that further growth of nuclear power is not in the interest of the American people. The only credible argument in favor of such power was that it was needed as a stop-gap to cover the period between the decline of fossil-fueled plants and the development of renewable energy sources (solar power). But this argument was based on a 1974 assumption that American energy consumption would rise from 72.8 quadrillion BTUs per year (quads, in energy parlance) to somewhere between 103 and 125 quads by 1985. Actual energy consumption, however, has risen much more slowly than this projection. In 1980 it was only 76.2 quads. This year it may dip below the 1974 level. In short, the lock-step relationship has been broken. From 1974 to 1980 the number of BTUs per dollar of GNP fell from 58,300 to 51,500. Fur-

ther conservation can reduce these numbers even further.

The continuing disregard for public safety—most recently demonstrated at Diablo Canyon, where the controversial power plant was first discovered to have been built backward, and then to have had the weight of the components calculated incorrectly—along with constant miscalculations of cost—have eroded public support for nuclear power. This was reflected in the two nuclear issues on the ballot Nov. 3. In Austin, Texas, voters favored a referendum to sell their city's share in the construction of a 2,500-megawatt plant. In Washington State, a referendum to require voter approval for future bonds to finance construction of electric plants of more than 250 megawatts carried by 495,000 to 356,000, even though the proponents were outspent by the power companies by \$1.2 million to \$300,000.

A program of conservation and the rapid development of solar power would be much more rational than Reagan's attempt to rescue the nuclear corporations. It, too, would require public subsidies, but in the public interest. The advantages, in addition to cheaper and safe power, would be increased employment—money invested in conservation rather than nuclear plants provides 40 percent more jobs, according to a recent study by the Council on Economic Priorities—and more local control of energy investment decisions. These goals are part of the Reagan rhetoric, but they can be achieved only by a government whose first priority is not to protect corporate profits.

## Where does the money go?

Our free-market and supply-side friends argue that tax reductions for the wealthy and the absence of controls on investment decisions will stimulate the economy by providing corporations with incentive to put their money to productive use. This argument has been used by both Democratic and Republican administrations in recent years as a means to solve the energy crisis. Give the oil companies big enough profits, the argument goes, and they will explore for more oil.

But the oil companies could care less about solving the energy crisis. Their only interest is in higher profits, as Mobil Corporation demonstrated two weeks ago when it offered \$5 billion to buy up Marathon Oil Co. It made the offer because Marathon is rich in domestic oil reserves, and it is cheaper to buy Marathon (Mobil's offer works out to about \$5 per barrel for Marathon's reserves) than to find new oil (\$15 per barrel, or more). As the oil analyst for the investment firm of Bache Halsey Stuart Shields, Inc., says, "It's cheaper to buy reserves on Wall Street than it is to go out and find them."

The only problem is that this method of making money will not increase oil production by one barrel, or natural gas production by one cubic foot, according to Ed Rothschild of the Energy Action Educational Foundation.

So the result of the high profits that were supposed to provide incentives to find more oil will simply be even higher profits for Marathon's stockholders—if the takeover bid works. There is no better argument for social ownership of oil and for investment decisions to be made on the principle of social need rather than profitability.



# LETTERS

*IN THESE TIMES* is an independent newspaper committed to democratic pluralism and to helping build a popular movement for socialism in the United States. Our pages are open to a wide range of views on the left, both socialist and non-socialist. Except for editorial statements appearing on the editorial page, opinions expressed in columns and in feature or news stories are those of the author and are not necessarily those of the editors. We welcome comments and opinion pieces from our readers.

## NO CHANGE AT STATE LEVEL

I AM CONCERNED THAT THE ARTICLE on NARAL's internal battles (*ITT*, Oct. 28) gave your readers a wrong impression. The article implies that NARAL is abandoning its commitment to organizing in favor of lobbying and "cutting deals." As the executive director of the Illinois affiliate of NARAL, I assure you that this is not so.

Grass roots organizing will continue to remain the focus of NARAL's efforts. If your reporter had contacted state coordinators throughout the country, she would have discovered a high level of commitment to increase the level of activism of pro-choice supporters through house meetings, post-card tables and political skills workshops. We are getting people involved in direct action, campaign work for pro-choice candidates, letter-writing campaigns and public meetings with elected officials. Many states, including Illinois, are working with our own political action committees to assist these efforts.

Regardless of the internal battles going on at NARAL in Washington, NARAL state organizers feel confident in our grass roots strategy. If the national board wants to supplement this strategy with lobbying and a media campaign, that is o.k. as long as it helps our organizing—which NARAL media campaigns have done in the past. As your reporter points out, the other side has used this dual strategy to great effect.

The pro-choice movement is entering a crucial phase. The Hatch Amendment presents a great danger. NARAL needs more than ever to activate people who are pro-choice.

—Jan Ryan  
Executive Director  
NARAL of Illinois

## CAMPUS CRACKDOWN

I AM DELIGHTED WITH JOHN JUDIS' article "Politics as a factor in tenure battles" (*ITT*, Sept. 23) and with Helen Samberg's letter. I would like to expand this area even further with an example of oppression within academia that extends to the graduate level.

At Oklahoma State University, more than 80 percent of lower division freshman and sophomore English courses are taught by graduate students. The work-load is tremendous, with many long hours in essay grading. About two years ago a small core of these students formed a new group called the Graduate Student Advisory Committee. The idea was hatched by several veteran grads involved in NOW and the Sunbelt Alliance, a local anti nuclear group. They were interested in probing the possibility of collective bargaining for better pay and hiring policies for graduate students within the English Department and eventually all graduate students on campus. It had never been tried on a conservative campus like OSU. One GSAC member even dared to bring in a member of the American Federation of Teachers to speak about the difficulties they may encounter in trying to ask for better conditions.

Last year, the grad who brought the AFT speaker was fired as a graduate associate within the English Department on the trumped charge of his absence from his office during a scheduled office hour, even though he left a note on his office door. There had never been a dismissal of a grad teacher in the department's history. This dismissed student

agitated for a hearing and for the first time in the history of the university a board was set up to review such a complaint. Many professors testified before the board that the student had been removed for political reasons. The jury did not reinstate the student to his former position. All the other founding members of the GSAC have since been harassed out of the program. The GSAC, now a puppet group, takes directives from the head of the department.

How much of this goes on at other universities? I hope letters will continue to come into *ITT* with examples.

—Len Skipeck  
Stillwater, Okla.

## IF ONLY

IN HIS PIECE ON CANCUN (*ITT*, Oct. 21), John Judis quotes Dudley Seers' view that the Brandt report falls "into the usual trap of 'third worldism,' that is, confusing governments and countries.

...To put the matter bluntly, aid to governments of 'poor' countries is one thing; aid to poor people of these countries another." True enough; but Judis should have gone on to note that there may be a way out of the "trap of 'third worldism.'" The best hope for this lies in the North's deliberately linking increased aid to Southern governments with changes in those governments' internal policies. Northern states, in other words, should say to a regime like Brazil's: "We will gladly meet all your NIEO demands (for more tariff preferences, more IMF voting power, debt renegotiation, etc.), if—and only if—you shift the focus of your domestic policy from inegalitarian growth to meeting basic needs and redistributing wealth and income."

There is no guarantee that such a linkage would succeed; nor is the Reagan administration at all likely to adopt it. But these are not good reasons for journalists to ignore it completely.

—Louis F. Cooper  
Washington

## SUBWAYS ARE FOR...

I HOPE MARILYN MIZRAHI IS NOT CONDONING the mess those kids make on New York subway cars (*ITT*, Oct. 21). Some of it I agree is very artistic and interesting, but most of it looks like shit. The places they do it are also extremely dangerous. Subway yards, with a live third rail, are not a place for kids to be roaming around painting subway cars. These ghetto children should find other ways of expressing their emotions and leave the subway cars alone. They should not be encouraged. I grew up riding Chicago's green and cream subway cars. I hope Chicago's ghetto children do not imitate New York's.

—Stephen C. Condit  
Hutchinson, Kan.

## WOULD YOU PRAISE A MUGGER?

MARILYN MIZRAHI'S PAEN TO GRAFFITI writers (*ITT*, Oct. 21) is one of the most misguided pieces of social commentary ever to appear in a left publication. An appropriate equivalent would be for a leftwing sports columnist to praise the strength, reflexes, and agility of muggers. Muggers, like graffiti writers, come "up from the ghetto." They undoubtedly see their actions as a way of saying "I'm here." Follow-

ing Mizrahi's logic, we ought to sponsor a citywide "Mugger's Bowl," with competitions in the five boroughs leading up to a gala halftime display at Madison Square Garden during a Knicks-Celtics game.

Turning actions that deface public property or threaten the safety of individual citizens into acts of protest and self-expression is precisely the kind of nonsense that keeps the left from being taken seriously. Unless we stand for some clearcut conceptions of public morality and civic responsibility, most people will avoid us like the plague, and demonstrate their good sense by doing so.

—Mark Nelson  
Brooklyn, N.Y.

## GRAFFITI

IF YOUR ARTICLE ON SUBWAY GRAFFITI in New York (*ITT*, Oct. 21) is supposed to celebrate the art form, or offer excuses for its practitioners, it is basically anti-socialist. If you rode New York subways twice a day for 15 years as I have done, you would realize how ugly and depressing graffiti is. It makes the common practice of going to and from work a particularly nasty experience.

The flowering of graffiti over the past 10 years seems to have had a negative effect on the people who operate, maintain and use New York's subways. It is an important psychological explanation for the system's virtual collapse. Of course, the system has been starved by our rulers, but graffiti has made its contribution.

A socialist vision ought to include systems of public transportation that are agreeable to use as well as efficient. The destructive acts of graffiti artists are more examples—as if we needed any more—of the basic inability of our society to organize an urban employment, educational and recreational system for adolescents that is more attractive than harmful public behavior.

I don't want to sound too pious about all this. I neither want nor expect teenagers to be goody two-shoes who congregate on street corners waiting to help old ladies cross over. But doing graffiti ranks right below mugging as harmful behavior.

—Melvin L. Wulf  
New York

## CALVERT II

I WOULD LIKE TO REGISTER THE FOLLOWING response to Michael Lerner's side of our "Dialog" (*ITT*, Sept. 30).

My argument with *familism* as an ideology for the left is that it has always been tied to reactionary political movements whether fascist or Stalinist. Puritanism, whether it be of the authoritarian left or the authoritarian right, has always been ready to brand gay people as enemies of the family, and it is one of the urgent political tasks of gay socialists to resist the spread of the sexual counter-revolution.

We need to be careful about language when we respond to the crises of human relationships. I'm not quite sure what point you were making when you ran a photo of Peter Orlovsky and Allen Ginsberg next to my article. And I do wonder why Michael Lerner stretches the use of the word "family" to include gay "families." My lover and I are best friends and have a deep commitment to our relationship; but calling us a "family" seems strained. We are a gay couple who are socialists and who have a spiritual-political commitment to radical non-violence and we sometimes hope that our relationship gives encouragement to other gay people who struggle to establish enduring love relationships in a hostile environment. But, I fail to see how any of that makes of us a "family."

The crisis of the family is largely the function of the disintegration of community in advanced capitalist societies and needs to be analyzed in that context. It is a community, both spiritual and political, that I feel the lack of and for which I long. I have also come to

believe that without explicit spiritual values—which are "natural" and not "supernatural" or "mystical"—human community is scarcely possible.

—Greg Calvert  
Corvallis, Ore.

## PLEASED

I JUST WANTED TO EXPRESS MY PLEASURE with the article about the ERA missionaries by Julie Dunfey and the article about NARAL by Rochelle Lefkowitz (*ITT*, Oct. 28). I am sometimes discouraged when it seems that "women's issues" aren't getting enough coverage in your newspaper.

Please continue your fine work, and give us more articles about the attacks on a woman's right to choose abortion.

—Colleen Hughes  
Omaha

## WERE THEY INFORMED?

I WAS QUITE DISAPPOINTED IN THE short article "Made in USA but sold to women in Africa" which you recently ran about Depo-Provera. I am not a fan of that drug and frankly am unhappy with all current hormonal contraceptives, but I consider that their use is superior to pregnancy for women who do not want to be pregnant and choose not to use the safer and almost always as effective barrier contraceptives.

That is the true issue. What information about contraceptives were the African women given? Could they make an informed choice? If they did so, then it was after all their choice. In fact, it is not established at all that Depo-Provera has more side-effects than any other hormonal contraceptive. And if women choose it for convenience reasons then it is entirely in their control.

How about doing a longer, better, more serious article on Depo-Provera in the third world, including the informed consent issue? The results of a good investigation might surprise us all.

—John Goldenring, M.D.  
Los Angeles

## NOT FAMILIAR?

THE COLUMNISTS IN *ITT* CONTINUE to malign Israel and its progressive forces, even when they are deserving of praise or defense by the democratic left. Your regular correspondent, David Mandel, consistently writes of Israel in a negative vein, stretching the facts to criticize even the labor and peace forces. Particularly appalling was his attempt, in his analysis of the recent elections, to brand Labor's slogan of "It's us against them" as a racial incitement against the Oriental community. Rather, the slogan referred to the traditional Israeli struggle of Labor against the right, with its chauvinist, anti-labor and clericalist motivations. Anyone familiar with the campaign, including attacks by Likud thugs on Labor headquarters and Shimon Peres' castigation of his Likud opponents as "Khomeinism," realizes that Mandel was distorting the true impulses of the labor alignment.

Similarly deplorable is Alexander Cockburn's light dismissal of the import of the AWACS sale to Saudi Arabia (*ITT*, Oct. 7). In any other context, this projected sale of arms to a rightist, feudal state by the U.S. would be rightly condemned in *ITT*. Query whether Cockburn would reach the same conclusions about the AWACS if they were destined for El Salvador or the Philippines. Does he actually favor the Saudi sale to spite the "Israel lobby"?

—Stephen E. Appell  
Brooklyn, N.Y.

*Editor's note: Please try to keep letters under 250 words in length. Otherwise we may have to make drastic cuts, which may change what you want to say. Also, if possible, please type and double-space letters—or at least write clearly and with wide margins.*



## IN DEPTH



Steve Kogan

## From public utility to the free market

By Dia Michels

**T**HE NEW MOTTO FOR MA Bell may soon change from the popular "Reach out and touch someone" to "Reach out and crush someone" as a result of Senate passage early in October of the Telecommunications Competition and Deregulation Act of 1981 sponsored by Senator Packwood (R-Ore.). The legislation has been hailed as everything from the full opening of the communications network to effective competition to "a private relief bill for AT&T."

The crux of the legislation is that it lets AT&T out of the 1956 Consent De-

cree between the company and the government and, for the first time, lets them compete in such unregulated fields as data processing and home information. The bill is designed to prevent the phone company from using ratepayers' money to fund unregulated activities by requiring that separate subsidiaries be established to provide the unregulated services.

The biggest concern this bill presents is how effective the separate subsidiary requirement will be in preventing abuse. The bill, as passed, would leave entire stock ownership of the subsidiary in the hands of Ma Bell. Sen. Hollings (D-S.C.), the Senate's major opponent of the bill, is concerned about opportunities for competitive abuses and wants a requirement that 30 percent of the subsidiary's

stock be owned by outside investors. Without more built-in safeguards, Hollings has said, the bill would "extinguish" competition in the telephone industry.

The efforts that have gone into rewriting the existing legislation, the Communications Act of 1934, are based on pressures from technological developments and industry deregulation by the FCC. These developments have challenged the assumptions on which AT&T operates and have led to a process of establishing new guidelines and tariffs that go from the confusing to the controversial.

AT&T was created as a monopoly charged with providing the American public with quality phone service. Its mission was based on two assumptions. First, phone service is a utility, not a luxury. The Communications Act of 1934 requires the provision of "universal service at reasonable rates." Second, the method of phone transmission has traditionally been through cable lines strung across the country and under the seas. Because laying cable is such a costly process, a monopoly was established as the most efficient method for providing telephone service.

Developments in satellites, microwaves, fiber optics, cable, digital and cellular communications have diminished the need for a single supplier and have sharply broadened the types of services that can affordably be offered.

The present monopoly rate structure called "Separations and Settlements" distributes subsidies from profitable to unprofitable services. The Separations process was developed from negotiated agreements among a limited number of parties on the assumption that the monopoly would continue. There was no competition in the long-distance market and not even anticipation of competition in the local distribution market. Business users subsidized residential users and urban users subsidized rural users.

The administration's push for free-market policies and competition requires cost-sensitive pricing. However, deregulation of the industry presents a set of problems:

1) If AT&T is still to be charged with providing "universal service at reasonable rates," then they will not be in the same position to compete as companies who operate in only the high-profit (i.e., long-distance calling) markets.

2) Basing prices on costs will cause dramatic increases in phone rates in

sparsely-populated areas, causing users to abandon the network and/or companies to discontinue providing service altogether.

3) If the number of subscribers to the network falls, two things happen. First, the value of the network goes down as it is only as valuable as the number of people that can be reached on it. Second, the country's ability to provide social services to its citizens decreases.

4) The lack of revenues in rural areas might force small phone companies to put off upgrading their equipment (i.e., maintaining electromechanical rather than installing digital exchange switches). Facilitating the upgrading of rural exchanges to digital retains both the quality of service and compatibility with the cities.

5) Opening the communications network to competition and possible fragmentations may endanger the nation's ability to maintain a network for emergency preparedness and national security.

Of course, the question that still remains to be answered is: If phone service is a utility, is it reasonable to require it to be cost-based? Public transportation, health care, and education are examples of services subsidized because their value is to society as a whole and not just to the individuals who can pay for them. One study has shown that considering the full social costs and benefits of telephones, local service rates should equal about half the cost of providing the service.

While there is no disagreement that the present system is both irrational and incompatible with a competitive marketplace, and while there is no disagreement that competitive developments have greatly enhanced the phone network, there is disagreement on how to get from here to there.

### First step.

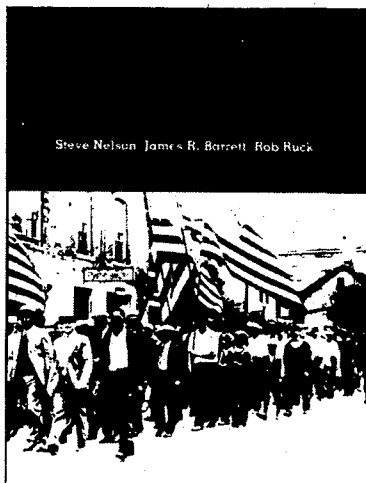
The first step necessary in looking at the restructuring of the phone industry is to determine a new set of goals. These should include reaffirming phones as a utility whose benefit is accrued to society collectively. There is no question that there is a compelling public need for universal availability. Competition in the last decade has not only lowered prices but also promoted a broad new range of consumer services. Competition should be encouraged wherever feasible. Public policy should include both administrative simplicity and corporate accountability. Efforts should be directed at reducing the chasm between rates and services in rural areas compared with cities. In areas where profitability is in doubt, alternatives such as local cooperative ownership should be explored.

The Senate bill has a clause that "interexchange and exchange rates in rural and remote areas do not exceed 110 percent of the national average rates for comparable service." However, this leaves open how "national averages" will be computed (should they include weighted factors for density or exchange size?) and it fails to address the fundamental policy questions involved. The National Telecommunications and Information Administration has proposed establishing a National Telecommunications Pool to allocate collected subsidies. The FCC is active in forcing AT&T to unbundle their prices so consumers know which part of their bill is paying for which part of their service.

While the Senate has done its work for now, the House has yet to come up with its version of the bill. Representative Wirth (D-Colo.), chair of the House Telecommunications Subcommittee, has said he hopes to produce a bill "significantly different" from the Senate bill. With the likelihood that whatever legislation finally emerges will be with us for another 50 years and the FCC (the main enforcer of the legislation) being subject to the vicious budget cuts in Washington, it might not be a bad thing for the House to take its time and to see that adequate safeguards are taken so that any telecommunications deregulation leads ultimately to the consumers' benefit. ■

*Dia Michels works for Carruthers, Irwin and Associates, a Washington, D.C., and San Francisco-based telecommunications consulting firm.*

## New from Pittsburgh



Steve Nelson James R. Barrett Rob Ruck



### STEVE NELSON, AMERICAN RADICAL

*Steve Nelson, James R. Barrett, Rob Ruck*

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The remarkable oral biography of a Croatian immigrant who became a high-ranking member of the U.S. Communist Party. Nelson moves from the unemployed miners of Pennsylvania to the classrooms of Moscow's Lenin School, and from the battlefields of Civil War Spain to the jails of Cold War Pittsburgh. "Lucidly written, well-organized, and, above all, packed with fascinating material. It stands out among the published works in the genre of the old radical memoir."—Robert Zieger. "Moving and powerful. . . . An important addition to our understanding of American Communism."—Library Journal

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# PERSPECTIVES

## Wrecking ball to hit civil rights in 1982

By Gregory D. Squires

**U**PON TAKING OFFICE Ronald Reagan assured the American public that his administration would carefully examine the costs as well as the benefits of all government regulations. Where the costs outweighed the benefits, he promised, the regulations would go. Presumably, where the benefits outweighed the costs the regulations would stay. From his record after one year in office, it is evident that in civil rights, only the costs count. Many civil rights regulations and other federal programs launched principally to aid the historical victims of discrimination have been eliminated or cut back, and more cuts are planned for 1982, without any consideration whatsoever for the benefits. With good reason Margaret Bush Wilson introduced the President at this summer's NAACP convention with the proviso, "The views you are about to hear are not necessarily those of the NAACP."

Attorney-General William French Smith brandishes one of the sharpest hatchets. In August he announced the Department of Justice would abandon busing and numerical goals in the fights against discrimination in education and employment, claiming, "The nation must end its over-reliance on remedial devices aimed solely at achieving inflexible and predetermined mathematical balance." Apparently he means what he says. So far the Department has backed out of or reversed itself in school desegregation litigation in Chicago, Houston, St. Louis, Seattle and elsewhere. Only five discrimination lawsuits were filed in the first six months of the Reagan administration, compared to 17 in the first six months of the Carter administration and 24 in the same time frame of the Nixon administration.

Also in August, Vice President Bush announced the administration will propose elimination or relaxation of the following regulations: EEOC's ban on tests that disproportionately exclude minorities or women under Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, because of business "concern" for record-keeping requirements; employer requirements to police sexual harassment among employees; sex discrimination provisions in athletic programs under Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972; and non-discrimination provisions against the handicapped in education programs under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973.

Federal funding agencies are also acting on their own behalf. The Department of Education, which Reagan vows to dismantle, asked the Justice Department to approve its revocation of rules that protect teachers, administrators and other school employees from sex discrimination under Title IX. The Transportation Department has revoked rules requiring that mass transit systems be accessible to the handicapped. And the Labor Department has decided the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 does not give handicapped people the right to take federal contractors to court for job discrimination.

A more explicit attack on civil rights is represented by proposed changes in federal contract compliance regulations. Currently all contractors with 50 or more employees and contracts worth \$50,000 or more must submit written affirmative action plans. Pre-

award reviews must be conducted when any contract reaches \$1,000,000. Under proposed rules these thresholds would be increased to 250 employees and \$1,000,000 (reducing the number of contractors covered from almost 17,000 to slightly more than 4,000) and the pre-award reviews would be eliminated. In addition, underutilization of minorities and women would be defined as employment of such groups at less than 80 percent of their availability in the relevant labor market compared to the 100 percent figure currently used as the benchmark. Back-pay awards would be limited to two years instead

for minorities and women. The Community Services Administration has already been dismantled. The same fate is planned for the Legal Services Corporation and the Economic Development Administration. Budget cuts ranging from 20 percent to 50 percent are proposed for programs and agencies like Title I of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, Emergency School Aid Act, Bilingual Education Act, Small Business Administration programs aiding minority-owned enterprises, federally assisted housing programs, community health centers and CETA.

No effort has been made by the administration to justify these cuts on a cost-benefit basis. But the Urban League has examined many of these programs and, in its report *The Status of Black America 1981*, concluded that manpower training, affirmative action in education and employment, AFDC, and other federal efforts, often maligned for waste and fraud, have in fact provided real and lasting benefits, particularly for racial minorities. According to the Urban League, the nation's minorities and the poor generally are being victimized by the "big lie."

The block grant approach preferred by

backoo and Firearms, viewed by the Southern Poverty Law Center's Klan-watch as the "federal government's currently most effective weapon in the fight against Klan-Nazi terrorism." At a recent hearing on hate group activity in Michigan several local and state officials pointed to the administration's retreat on civil rights as a subtle measure that organized bigotry and violence will be tolerated, if not sanctioned.

None of this is to deny the many inefficiencies that plague the federal bureaucracy. The civil rights enforcement agencies are no exception. On occasion, federal fund recipients find that compliance with the rules of one agency would require them to violate

*School aid is one of several areas scheduled to be cut back 20 to 50 percent next year.*



Steve Kogan

of the current three-year limit. Other "reforms" are included in the proposed regulations, and still others may be added before they are formally adopted.

Perhaps the clearest signals emanating from the administration are the President's rejection of the Equal Rights Amendment and his less than clear stand on extension of the Voting Rights Act, due to expire in 1982.

### The beginning of an era.

While the posture of the administration on civil rights was clearly established earlier this year, the wrecking ball is not scheduled to swing into action until 1982. According to 1982 budget proposals (not taking into consideration the additional 12 percent cut recently requested by the President), the five principal federal civil rights enforcement agencies will lose 697 positions, a reduction of more than 9 percent. (Those agencies include the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, the U.S. Department of Labor, the Civil Rights Division of the U.S. Department of Justice, the Office for Civil Rights of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, and the Office for Civil Rights of the U.S. Department of Education.)

Proposed cuts in federal social programs will prove equally devastating

the administration as an alternative not only would fail to provide similar levels of program support, but also does not bode well for civil rights enforcement in light of the historical implications of "states' rights" for minorities. The Black Codes and Jim Crow laws passed in the late 1800s on the heels of the 13th, 14th and 15th Amendments eliminating slavery and granting blacks freedom, including the right to vote, reveal how quickly our nation is capable of retracting critical social reforms, particularly when the federal government abdicates its responsibilities.

The parallels between the post-reconstruction and post-1960s eras should not be overdrawn. However, recent outbursts of bigotry and racially motivated violence, and the increased visibility of groups like the Ku Klux Klan, evidenced in the electoral success of Klansmen around the nation, suggest that such hate groups should not be cavalierly dismissed. (In 1980 California State Grand Dragon Tom Metzger won a Democratic nomination for Congress and Gerald Carlson, with links to the Klan and Nazis, won 53,000 votes as a Republican candidate for Congress from Michigan.) While denouncing such groups in policy statements, the President has proposed abolishing the Bureau of Alcohol, To-

the rules of another. In one instance two copies of the same application for funds were found in the files of an agency, one marked "approved" the other "disapproved." Yet the studies that cite these failings invariably point to inadequate resources (money and staff) and a passive approach to enforcement as the major barriers to their effectiveness in asserting equal opportunity.

Local problems can often be handled better at the local level. But protecting the civil rights of each citizen is a national concern; one that should not be subject to varying standards and whims of state and local jurisdictions, or arbitrary cost-benefit calculations. As the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights stated in its assessment of the proposed 1982 budget *Civil Rights: A National, Not a Special Interest*:

"Civil rights are not simply 'special interests' competing for budgetary attention. They are nationally endowed rights that the Civil War amendments obligate the national government to implement. These constitutional protections are the foundation upon which the American body politic rests."

Gregory D. Squires is the executive director of Urban Advocates, a reinvestment consulting firm based in Evanston, Illinois, and Dayton, Ohio.



# Weather

Continued from page 13

ment seem probable. How can this be explained?

One can imagine that the blacks arrived in Rockland through precisely the same process of political degeneration as the whites. For them, too, history repeats itself, in an even more ghastly way. History the first time for Nathaniel Burns, the gunman captured in the Queens shootout, was the Black Panther Party in the late '60s. Like SDS, the Black Panther Party was a movement that achieved its successes in large part by bold action. It was certainly bold when Huey Newton and Bobby Seale led a contingent of armed Panthers into the California state legislature. It was certainly bold to set up antipolice street patrols in Oakland to keep the police in line. Actions like these built the party. Ultimately the organization came to symbolize a type of person who had rejected submission, who stood for heroic resistance. That was the meaning of the famous Panther look, the military beret, the rough-tough leather jackets, the scowl.

Like SDS, the Black Panther Party was short-lived. Bold actions and heroic posturing quickly became dangerous—in other words, the police attacked. Fred Hampton, reputedly the Panther leader with the fewest delusions about violence, was murdered in his bed. There may have been frame-ups: Amnesty International has called for a retrial of Black Panther Geronimo Pratt. And then there were splits. The survivors drifted into conventional political work, or into private life, or found Jesus, or became gangsters. Part of the East Coast super-militant faction formed the BLA.

Why a campaign of assassination against the police? There were political reasons that some might have taken seriously. Latin American guerrillas have assassinated policemen for years, in the hope of weakening the rule of the oligarchy and overthrowing the caudillo. The Italian-Argentinian anarchists were doing it 50 years ago. Then there is revenge and hatred, without political logic. The third explanation has to be that, like the Weatherpeople's bombings, the cop-killing may have represented for a tiny number of old Panthers a way of continuing the heroic mode.

This alone can explain whatever collaboration may have existed between the post-Weather people in Rockland and the BLA. There had to be an agreement on basic values, a surviving belief in the heroic deed. The collaboration is not likely to be on the broad scale imagined in the more lurid accounts. More plausibly it is a matter of individuals from both the



The "barbarians" were right at Columbia University in 1968. But the passions of the time were quickly spent.

black and the white currents groping toward one another after their respective movements had collapsed. But of course to these people the alliance must have seemed a big development.

From the black point of view, collaboration must have represented a second chance. The BLA has no easy sources of money. It cannot have been simple for the blacks to come to trust the whites. No doubt the whites had to prove themselves. But sooner or later the advantages of collaboration must have become obvious.

For the whites, collaboration might well have seemed a long-awaited climax. The thrust of Weather third worldism had been that black militancy is the vanguard of revolution in America. Always before one had worked with such black vanguards from a distance. There was cooperation between SDS and the Panthers 11 or 12 years ago, but it was limited. The Weather Underground

seems to have failed to forge links with black underground groups, in spite of its doctrine. So for these post-Weatherfolk to have the black ultra-vanguard there in person, sitting across the table at a clandestine meeting, to have finally won the trust of the black underground and to have established an alliance must have seemed like a triumph second to none in the history of the underground. These BLAers, or ex-BLAers are the genuine article. Taking part in actions with them must have seemed a gloriously long way from the days of haranguing wimpy students in the dormitories.

## No relation.

There may have been more than the three murders in Rockland. But take the most limited possibility: it was an isolated holdup by a handful of individuals, some of whom call themselves radicals, in which the robbers lost their heads and started shooting indiscriminately. Even

this version of the affair is a terrible shock. Plainly these people have gone through a bizarre development to come to such a pass.

There is an active left today, but it bears no relation to the Nanuet groups. There is a left in the unions. One of the biggest unions in the country is headed by a man who calls for socialism. The Democratic Socialist Organizing Committee, namby-pamby as it is, is swallowing up remnants of the old New Left and has grown into the largest socialist organization in this country in decades. The antinuke movement brings out massive numbers of people. The prochoice movement fights on. Citizen action groups proliferate. These things are the living left. Menshevism and non-violence turn out not to be in the dustbin of history after all.

What have the heroes of Nanuet and Nyack to do with these currents? Nothing. Zero. No relation. The bloody shootout walks into our consciousness like a ghost. These bandits are living in the past to the point of madness. The horror they elicit in us comes not only from their brutality but also from the glimpse they have given us into the cobwebs in their minds. One weeps for the murdered men. But one also weeps for what has happened to these idealists of long ago.

The second horror, of course, is how those other terrorists, the antiterrorists, will respond. It is ghastly to imagine what Jeremiah Denton's subcommittee on terrorism must be dreaming of. And already the FBI had begun to flip out. One FBI spokesman has claimed a Weatherpeople-IRA link. Another says that the Weather Organization is directed by Cuba. Behind Cuba, of course, is the Soviet Union. Already we have a BLA-Weatherpeople-Irish-Republican-Cuban-led-Soviet-backed conspiracy. It's surprising we haven't heard about Qaddafi's role in all this, except that Qaddafi turns out to be a CIA conspiracy.

The response of local authorities is worth noting. Dave Gilbert and Judy Clark were brought into court with black eyes. Samuel Brown's lawyer complained that Brown was badly beaten. But D.A. Kenneth Gribetz says no beatings took place. On the same day Detective Irwin Jacobson shot Samuel Smith to death while he was trying to run away in Queens. Smith was climbing a fence, and workmen in the area watched as Jacobson shot him in the face. But Jacobson and the police commissioner say Jacobson fired in self-defense. Nathaniel Burns has been hospitalized with "blunt abdominal trauma." With all respect to the dead cops, let us not forget that police departments are brutal and murderous too. And they lie.

Paul Berman frequently writes for the *Village Voice*, where this first appeared in longer form.

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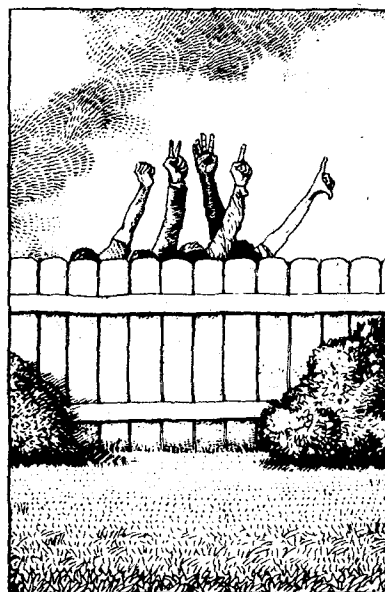
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## INPRINT

## FOREIGN POLICY

Basic guide to  
our new horror

**El Salvador: Central America  
in the New Cold War**

Edited by Marvin E. Gettleman,  
Patrick Lacefield, Louis  
Menashe, David Mermelstein  
and Ronald Radosh  
Grove Press, 466 pp., \$7.95

By John Echeverri-Gent

It creates *deja vu* when Secretary of State Alexander Haig tells us that the junta in El Salvador has become mired in a military stalemate with leftist guerrillas who, he has already told us, are part of a "well orchestrated international communist campaign" to subvert the free world. On Nov. 5, he announced that the U.S. would try to break the stalemate by expanding its role in the conflict, even though the situation has deteriorated after past increases in American involvement.

At a time when the Reagan administration is evoking this eerie parallel to early American involvement in Vietnam, *El Salvador: Central America in the New Cold War* makes for timely and insightful reading. This book, a hefty anthology of 53 essays, tells the story behind the bloody conflict in that tiny Central American country with selections from an impressively diverse array of sources. The editors have excerpted from periodicals ranging from *The New Left Review* and Institute for Policy Studies Reports to the *State Department Bulletin*. They have located transcriptions of

*An exiled  
Salvadoran  
army captain  
testified that  
terrorist acts  
are planned  
by top officers  
in the military.*

Central American radio broadcasts and hunted up material from small religious periodicals and occasional papers from Oxford.

Some essays trace the roots of the current conflict back to the development of an agrarian structure in which six families alone possess as much land as 80 percent of the total rural population. Some recount the crucial awakening of the Catholic Church to social injustice and points out its dual role in legitimating the Central American revolutionaries' armed struggle and tempering their dogmatism.

Other selections take on the State Department's position that the ruling junta is a reformist center caught between two extremes. Once the figleaf of land reform is stripped away, the junta stands as a grotesquely repres-



Stuart Ziff

sive regime. An exiled Salvadoran army captain's congressional testimony states that the death squads are made up of members of the government security forces and that their acts of terrorism are planned by high-ranking mil-

itary officers. Another selection describes the Sumpul River massacre—the Salvadoran army's My Lai. Particularly horrifying is Rep. Barbara Mikulski's (D-Md.) interviews with women who witnessed the Salvadoran army split-

ting the stomachs of pregnant women and ripping out the fetuses.

Cynthia Aranson's essay points out a degree of American responsibility for these atrocities that many Americans are unaware of. Since the '50s the U.S. has trained 1971 Salvadoran military officers and 448 Salvadoran police. Many of these currently occupy key positions in the Salvadoran security establishment.

The parallels to Vietnam are foreboding. Once again we hear reports of fruitless search-and-destroy missions, refugees and napalm. As in Vietnam, American identification with a regime that violates basic American values of political freedom and human rights lowers our international prestige and isolates us from our allies. Even more ominous, with the Reagan administration's release of the White Paper last February the government again appears ready to pervert the truth in order to convince Americans that their security lies in military intervention into the internal affairs of other countries.

How did we get here again? "The Legacy of Vietnam," including selections by Ronald Reagan, the State Department and William Colby, shows how the right is attempting to rewrite the history of Vietnam in order to legitimize new military adventures. An analysis of this trend by Walter LaFeber points out how these "new revisionists want to create a mood, not recall a past."

*El Salvador: Central America in the New Cold War* is more than an anthology of views. It organizes its essays into a cogent argument.

—Denise Levertov

## U N R E S O L V E D

"See the blood in the streets"  
—Neruda

1

Fossil shells, far inland; a god; bones;  
they lie exposed by the backhoe.

Little stars continue to confide their silken hopes  
among rough leaves.

In blood, his own, a man writes on a wall,  
Revolution or Death. Not then. Now.

Now in a dry crevice, the corn, His Grace  
the God of Maiz,  
wraps his parchment about the green nub  
destined to be gold.

2

When one has begun to believe  
the grip of doubt tightens.

A child is born. Earthquake kills  
20,000. That's the commonplace.

A dialectic always half-perceived. We know  
no synthesis.

3

What we fear begins and begins. Fools and criminals  
rule the world. Life is a handful of stones  
loosely held in their fists.

4

Wonderful earthquake! Majestic lava pouring  
unstinted from mountain's fire! Ceremonious flood!  
You ravage but are not hideous. Compare:

chopped-off heads stare in El Salvador  
at their steaming torsos, flat circles

that were their necks revealing  
closepacked flesh and bones and the sectioned tubes  
through which

food and drink used to pass, and breath. See it on film.

Run the scene over again. And over again.  
For verisimilitude, many hundred times  
will not be enough.

Just out of range—

of the camera, not of the bullets—

babies, tossed high for the Junta's  
target practice, plummet  
past their parents' upturned screaming faces and hit  
the reddening river with small splashes.  
Hear it. It sounds like someone idly pitching rocks;  
as if a terrified dog were being stoned  
while it swam in circles; while it drowned.

5

We know so much of daily bread,  
of every thread of lovingly knit compassion;  
garments of love clothe us, we rest  
our heads upon darkness; when we wake

sapphire transparency calls forth our song.  
And this is the very world, the same, the world

of vicious power, of massacre.  
Our song is a bird that wants  
to sing as it flies, to be  
the wings of praise, but doubt

binds tight its wire to hold down  
flightbones, choke back breath.  
We know no synthesis.



## ART «» ENTERTAINMENT

## EL SALVADOR

## The case for antiwar protest, in living color



By Pat Aufderheide

The question mark is gone this time around.

*El Salvador: Another Vietnam*, a 53-minute documentary, was produced by the same group that made the report *El Salvador: Another Vietnam?* for public TV last year. This version has 65 percent new material. An international collaboration, its making, as well as the product, testify to the urgency of its information.

The film is modestly straightforward in construction and clean in execution. It quickly sets up our "need to know" by showing parallels between U.S. policy toward Korea, Vietnam and El Salvador.

Then comes the debunking. President Jose Napoleon Duarte, whom the military installed (we see brutish military figures who could have stepped out of a bad cartoon in news coverage of the inauguration), conducts "agrarian reform." But, people testify, reform never touched the crucial coffee plantations, and where it was undertaken it has been a state of siege, moving peasants into inadequate, guarded refugee camps or killing them.

Is the military protecting the people against terrorists? Several "people's army" leaders claim the label belongs on the other side. The mother of a victim describes how military men picked her son off a bus and shot him at random. A beefy, grinning general explains that those who resist the military are "enemies of the people"; Duarte, with a dull, calculated look, says there is no "repression," only "abuses of authority." News footage from the deaths of Maryknoll nuns (with interview material from David Helvarg with one of them, Ita Ford) and the death of Archbishop Romero bolster the claim

that the government more accurately deserves the label of terrorist than the army-in-assembly of the coalition FMLN.

All-too-lurid scenes of street fighting show that boys and girls are fighting and dying, and it looks like they don't have much choice. Why do they think soldiers fight them? One civilian says, "The Guardia are rounded up like dogs and forced to serve—they're just poor people like us."

Lastly, the film urges action.

### Filmmakers from several countries donated work.

It shows congressional opposition to aid to El Salvador; support by unions of the resistance movement through refusal to load military shipments at

docks; and public support through spring 1981 marches in Los Angeles, New York and Washington. The film ends with intercut faces of Salvadorans and Americans.

"We were very conscious of the parallels with the antiwar movement," said Tete Vasconcellos, a Brazilian co-producer. (Co-producer Glenn Silber also made *The War at Home*, the celebrated documentary chronicling the development of the Vietnam antiwar movement in Madison, Wisc.)

"The film was made as an organizing tool. We feel that similar policies of the U.S. government should be met with similar policies on the part of the North American people. The Salvadorans need that support, like the Vietnamese did."

The film testifies to a developing international network of expertise and support among filmmakers. Also working on the film were Pamela Yates and Tom Sigel, who also made *Resurgence*, and who filmed in El Salvador for this version. To find more material, Vasconcellos went to Mexico, where she found filmmakers enthusiastic about the project. In all, footage from six other films was donated.

"There was a feeling that it was terribly important to get this information out to North Americans," said Vasconcellos. "In Mexico people know much more about El Salvador. There is a lot of news on the TV every night; they understand Central American problems."

The images of daily violence that the film presents are both horrific and undeniable, much like those in the haunting, deeply disturbing book, *Nicaragua*, by photographer Susan Meiselas.

Here too are the banal plastic buckets, the Elvis Presley t-shirts, the bright tropical landscape and pastel facades. And death. Faces blown off, little

children leaking guts through pinafores, blank and desperate faces of people in camps, condemned to wait for nothing.

The film, like the book, sets up a double reaction. At first there is a revulsion at the notion of even capturing these images, of the indecency of lurching into a surreal hell to "get it on film." Then it dawns that not seeing it will not make it go away. Beyond the perverse titillation of peering at other people's blood—death, live-from-El-Salvador—is the understanding, and the changing, of that ugly truth.

The film has been edited expertly (by Deborah Shaffer, co-producer of *The Wobblies*) to give you the impact of its appalling material without lingering on or even commenting much on its bizarre brutality. The filmmakers make the case for El Salvador and against military aid without hysteria. Their evidence is overwhelming.

For further information contact Icarus Films, 200 Park Ave. S., #1319, NY, NY 10003, (212) 674-3375.



## View from the guerrilla camp

By Anne Ireland

*El Salvador: The People Will Win*, an 80-minute film released by the Revolutionary Film Institute of El Salvador, opens with a convoy of the junta's soldiers passing through several peasant villages. We, the guerrillas, are everywhere, the narrator tells us, and his words are borne out as the camera travels with this army convoy to an action against the guerrillas. The film emphasizes the guerrillas' military strength throughout, and one interview explains the base of their support. A 13-year-old boy whose father was ambushed by the National Guard, his face wet with tears, says his father was a comrade who taught him everything he knows about liberty and struggle. The next day he is shown being sworn into the guerrilla army.

The last sequence in the film shows the unity between civilian and military in this people's army. A peasant woman waits at the edge of the jungle until a young guerrilla emerges, in red mask and beret, to drop one of

the cameras used in making this film into her laundry basket. He disappears back into the forest, while she returns to her village.

*El Salvador: The People Will Win* attempts but fails to give an overview of the country's history—it explains too much too fast. However, the force and power of the liberation movement comes through. Indeed, this was one of the Revolutionary Film Institute's primary goals. José Castillo, U.S. distributor of the film, said, "The media here claim that the revolution is being engineered by Cuba, Nicaragua and the Soviet Union, but it has occurred because the very basic needs of the majority of our people have not been met. The people themselves are leading this rebellion." Castillo pointed out that there is a tradition of popular resistance in El Salvador going back to 1932.

"Yet this film could never have been made without the cooperation of people outside our country, because the Film Institute does not have the laboratory facilities. Preliminary editing was done in Nicaragua, and al-

### A peasant smuggles out shot footage in her laundry.

most finished in Cuba. The film was sent to New York where Deborah Shaffer (*The Wobblies*, *El Salvador: Another Vietnam*) re-edited some parts of the film to clarify them for American viewers. The English subtitles and narration were done in Canada."

Conditions for making the film on location in El Salvador were less difficult than one might imagine, Castillo added, because much of the film was shot in Chalatenango province, which is controlled by the guerrillas. While the sequence detailing the boy mourning his father's death was being shot the junta's troops attacked the guerrilla stronghold with heavy artillery, but the guerrillas forced the troops to retreat.

Castillo described the men and

women who appeared in the film as "defined people"—those who were prepared to go underground, to change their names, their occupations, and to move, if necessary to another town or area controlled by the guerrillas. This is, he said, the secret of the revolution's popular support. The areas controlled by the guerrillas are far safer than those controlled by the junta.

Castillo is realistic about the chances of this film offsetting the barrage of network news coverage from a different slant. "We have no plans to use it commercially. There is no good market for independent foreign films. Basically, the film is aimed at people who know something about our struggle and would like to learn more. We want you to come away from this thinking twice about the *New York Times* claiming that the junta is moderate."

For more information on *El Salvador: The People Will Win*, in Spanish and English versions, write: P.O. Box 208, Bronx, NY 10468, (212) 777-2341, or 1721 Columbia Rd., Washington, DC (301) 270-4784.



## THEATER

## Hispanic self-discovery goes on stage

By Stephen Most

SAN FRANCISCO

The Colombian mime stepped into the audience. His show, *Mimeografías*, was not yet over. Onstage his *compañeros* in whiteface watched as, can in hand, the mime approached spectators one by one and gestured for donations.

The appeal was theatrical, but the money put in the can was more than a prop. Teatro La Mama had traveled from Colombia to San Francisco to take part in the 11th annual Tenaz Chicano/Latino Teatro Festival and needed to cover expenses. Tenaz is Teatro Nacional de Aztlán, a coalition of 15 theater companies. The hosts, Teatro Gusto and Teatro Latino, had invited *teatros* from four Spanish-speaking countries and the southwestern U.S. to San Francisco's Mission District, where many Latin Americans and Chicanos live. Founded in 1970 by Mexican and Chicano *teatros*, Tenaz exists to bring together Chicano and Latino theater workers. According to Marco Contreras, director of San Diego's Teatro Mestizo, Latin American theater has played an important part in the cultural self-discovery of Chicanos.

The plays ranged from theater at its best to works that sacrifice aesthetics on the altar of ideology. The outstanding plays at Tenaz came from Mexico, although American companies also showed works that represent a sphere of life rather than a factional viewpoint.

*La Carpa*, Mexico's traveling tent theater, vaudevillian in style and satirical in tone, was an early influence on Teatro Campesino, which emerged from the farmworkers' movement in 1965. In the early '70s Campesino turned *indigenista*, seeking cultural roots in Mexican Indian traditions. Today, according to artistic director Luis Valdez, Campesino seeks to enter "the mainstream of American culture," using film and TV as well as theater. Other Chicano companies, based in cities and exposed, through Tenaz, to the struggles of Latin American peoples, have regarded *teatro* as a form of political expression. In the past Tenaz festivals set the stage for ideological conflicts, but in recent years *teatros'* paths have been recognized as complementary. This year emphasis was placed on artistic ability. Participants held criticism sessions on each others' work and at workshops shared skills in directing, acting and playwriting.

The festival, which occurred in September during National Hispanic Heritage Week, observed historic events of the Hispanic community. Shows at a street fair celebrated Mexican Independence Day. Teatro Latino's performance of *Liz Estrella*, an adaptation of Aristophanes into *barrio* Spanglish, written and directed by Chilean exile Carlos Barón, took place on the 50th anniversary of Pinochet's coup.

The Latin American plays appeared before Spanish-speaking people; the Chicano plays had audiences of Anglos and Hispanics. "There was only one



Poster illustration for the 11th International Chicano Latino Teatro Festival.

night," said festival coordinator Richard Talavera, "that we didn't have to turn people away" from the 230-seat Mission Cultural Center.

The Mexican productions exemplified the diversity and quality of theater as a political art. According to Emilia Carballido, one of Mexico's best-known playwrights, universities and independent (alternative) playhouses in his country support the development of new plays. In his *D.F. 2 A.M.*, five scenes early one morning in Mexico City unfold with a humor reminiscent of Neil Simon. But while a Simon couple makes people laugh by fighting over a personal problem, Carballido's couples argue over giving money to a beggar, or discover, when they find a robber in their room, that not only do they have to pay off the police, but the police are also in collusion with the thief.

The hit of the festival was *Cúcara y Mácara* by Oscar Liera, an iconoclastic satire that attacks the idolatry, hypocrisy and misogyny of Mexican Catholicism.

*Cúcara y Mácara* dramatizes the aftermath of an explosion that has destroyed the image of

La Señora de Psyche. Rather than risk an investigation the authorities replace the statue and declare a miracle, elevating to sainthood the imbecilic monk who witnessed the blast. The monologue of another monk may represent the work's point of view. Having lost his way, his reason for life, the character seeks a faith based on conviction rather than custom. *Cúcara y Mácara* is a work of protest, and the passion of its performance testifies to its meaning for the actors.

It raised a storm of controversy in Mexico City this year. According to one reviewer the play showed that "theater has an enormous subversive power." One night a gang of 60 religious right-wingers leaped onstage and assaulted the actors. The long-term hospitalization of five actors and a ban by the Mexican government stopped the show. At Tenaz La Compañía Infantería, a professional company associated with Veracruz University gave two performances, repeating the play by popular demand.

Two Chicano plays offered allegories of a society that wastes people's lives. Teatro Gusto's *The Leash*, which focuses on

drug addiction in the *barrio*, is an impressive first work by 20-year-old playwright Herberto Sigüenza. In it a *pachuco*, inspired by a character in Luis Valdez' *Zoot Suit*, gives advice to a youngblood who is trying to break out of his self-destructive lifestyle in a land of no opportunity. The story is compelling and the scenes, though sometimes sketchy, are effective. Teatro de la Esperanza's *The Octopus*, written as a Brechtian parable by Rodrigo Duarte-Clark and collectively remade into vaudeville by the company, shows a beast whom everyone waits on at her restaurant. The waiter, the cook, the peasants and the army all serve the Octopus, whose hunger consumes their lives.

*Mimeografías* also attempted to represent a whole society. Before the play began, the mime spoke about the Colombian military regime disguised as a Christian Democratic civil government. "Our internationally most

prominent person, Gabriel García Márquez, has been driven into exile," he said, explaining that Márquez escaped to Mexico after learning that the army was about to arrest him. "No one is exempt," he concluded.

After collecting donations in the can, the mime led audience members onstage where they stood by characters who contended with an antagonist who owned their apartments, their workplaces, the goods they need and the guns that keep them in line. Suddenly soldiers entered carrying rifles, which they pointed at the public.

The show was over; applause broke the tension. People expressed relief, for the play had been too long for mime to sustain. But perhaps more memorable and moving than the play itself was the silence with which it spoke.

Stephen Most is a San Francisco-based reporter and playwright who works with the Dell'Arte Players Company.

## Troupes exchange survival techniques in "bad new days"

Teatro Festival was one of four political theater convocations that took place in the U.S. recently.

The Gathering, sponsored by Cherry Creek Theatre, brought more than 500 people from Mexico, Canada and the U.S. to Saint Peter, Minn., for a week of performances and conversations in "working collectives." In Ozone, Tenn., Alternate ROOTS (Regional Organization of Theaters—South) held its annual meeting of 30 associated companies from southeastern states. And in San Francisco, immediately following Tenaz, the fourth annual Peoples Theater Festival presented 15 plays, eight workshops and four forums for theater workers.

Like the Gathering, the Peoples Theater Festival was a multi-cultural event. Among its productions were a one-man show by Medicine Story, a Wampanoag Indian; a Jewish play, *The Golem*, and a Guatemalan play directed by a Hondureño, both performed by California's Bear Republic Theater; Idris Ackamoor's *Cultural Odyssey*, a jazz-dance-theater collage of black experience; and Teatro de la Esperanza's *Octopus*.

A leading topic of discussions at the festival was survival in the current economic climate—these "bad new days," to borrow a phrase from Brecht. The San Francisco Mime Troupe derives 80 percent of its income from performances, especially during their national and international tours. (This year's outdoor show, *Factwino Meets the Moral Majority*, in which a superhero, armed with the power to make people think, takes on Jerry Falwell, attracted a 50 percent larger public than usual and made twice as much money as other summer productions.) But most other theaters have relied heavily on grants and CETA jobs to make

their way. A few companies, such as Teatro Campesino, may now support themselves with tours, commercial runs, and seasonal attendance at home performance spaces. For most peoples theaters, however, these options are out of reach.

Yet according to Don Adams and Arlene Goldbard of the Baltimore-based NAPNOC (Neighborhood Arts Programs National Organizing Committee), "Recent and rapid changes in funding, while discouraging in the short run, seem to have had a paradoxically positive effect." The money crunch has led some theater groups to search for a wider public, improve organization and find allies such as unions and health programs, which can use plays as educational tools. For example, *Performance Anxiety*, which the Dell'Arte Players Company showed at the Peoples Theater Festival, began as part of a health clinic's sex education project. This collectively written play about a father in spite of himself explores male responsibility for birth control in *commedia dell'arte* style.

Festival events throughout the city drew diverse audiences and fostered debate. In a lively panel discussion on political and experimental theater, the point was made that a schism between experimental and political theater does not exist in Europe as in this country; Brecht's work was both avant-garde and political as is the fringe scene in English theater today. R.C. Davis challenged performance artist George Coates to do a work on revolution in Central America. And Joan Holden of the Mime Troupe talked with Coates about ways in which they can learn from each others' work. It was one example of a long-needed dialogue between experimental artists and artists with political goals. —S.M.



# Nuclear

Continued from page 6

Act, enacted that year by a vote of 411 to 0 in the House and 88 to 3 in the Senate, permitted nuclear exports only to those nations that would accept certain "safeguards" or restrictions on all peaceful nuclear facilities (whether imported from the U.S. exports or produced indigenously). These safeguards are administered by the International Atomic Energy Agency.

An American decision to use civilian plutonium for weapons production—at a time when the U.S. is prohibiting other nations from doing so—would compound the hypocrisy and inconsistency of U.S. non-proliferation policies. Many countries, already irritated by the discriminatory nature of past policies, might finally be provoked to reject the U.S. strictures and move ahead with their own weapons programs. And who would blame them? Why continue to pretend that a nuclear power-nuclear weapons link does not exist when the world's nuclear leader has sanctified it?

Second, a U.S. decision to use civilian plutonium for military purposes would broadcast to the world the feasibility and cost-effectiveness of the LIS purification process. After the destruction of Hiroshima, a number of U.S. physicists remarked that other nations now had a tremendous advantage over the U.S. in producing their first nuclear explosives for the simple reason that they knew it could be done. The same might be said to apply to Laser Isotope Separation. LIS research has long been veiled in secrecy, for it was widely reasoned that LIS might provide a simpler, cheaper and easier-to-conceal route to the bomb than other available methods. But the effectiveness and feasibility of LIS was always a matter of considerable doubt. That doubt, perhaps the biggest obstacle to foreign proliferation of LIS, would be removed by a U.S. plutonium diversion program.

Third, a weapons-from-wastes pro-

gram would directly contradict Reagan's own international nuclear policy objectives. The cornerstone of his non-proliferation policy, announced July 13, is a promise to increase U.S. support for International Atomic Energy Agency Safeguards—the very safeguards designed to keep military and civilian aspects of nuclear energy firmly separated. Reagan promised, furthermore, that the United States would once again become the world's leader in peaceful nuclear affairs.

## Linking up the opposition.

On the home front, a critical element of the Reagan domestic nuclear policy unveiled on Oct. 8 is a renewed commitment to the nation's breeder reactor program, based on the disputable assumption that uranium resources will soon be insufficient to meet U.S. demand. The breeder reactors, which produce as much, or more, nuclear fuel than they consume, emerged as one of the few sacred cows in the new civilian budget, fueled by a \$520 million allocation plus up to \$240 million for the nearly defunct Clinch River Breeder Reactor Program.

But a decision to use civilian nuclear wastes for explosives would contradict Reagan's own commitment to the breeder. The same LIS process that the administration would like to use for the weapons buildup has other applications. Recent studies indicate, for example, that LIS can reduce the uranium requirements of modern commercial reactors by up to 40 percent by increasing the efficiency of uranium utilization. So if the LIS process is truly within our reach, as the Energy Department's testimony would seem to indicate, then why do we now need the breeder?

But perhaps the most far-reaching impact of the Energy Department's proposal may be to link commercial nuclear power with nuclear weapons in the minds of those who have campaigned against one or the other. A plutonium diversion program would settle an old argument in the anti-nuclear movement. In his most recent book, *Energy/War: Breaking the Nuclear Link*, Amory Lovins asserted that "Civilian nuclear reactors are essentially bomb factories that produce electri-

city as a byproduct." His thesis was dismissed by many reviewers as unfounded and sensational. The new program would make it difficult for anyone to argue with him.

Faced with a direct link between commercial and military nuclear programs, thousands of opponents of nuclear weapons, many of whom now voice only minor opposition (if any) to nuclear power, might be recruited to the anti-nuclear power ranks. Groups such as Physicians for the Prevention of Nuclear War, the National Council of Churches, the American Association for the Advancement of Science, the National Catholic Conference and members of the arms control community who up until now have focused their efforts on the arms race might consider stockholder actions against commercial nuclear enterprises similar to those orchestrated against Rockwell International, Martin Marietta and other weapons firms. Utility rate hearings, already political forums, might become anti-nuclear conventions. Though the utilities have long urged some government action on the spent fuel problem, a plutonium diversion program would be, at best, a public relations nightmare, and at worst, the death blow for commercial nuclear power.

The idea of using commercial plutonium as a weapons source was described by Secretary Edwards to be only in the "conversation phase" at the Energy Department. And administration officials are at least aware of some convincing reasons why the idea should go no further than cocktail-hour musings. Reagan's own Assistant Secretary of State, James Malone, may have provided the best summary of these. In a recent speech before London's Uranium Institute, he argued that "The economic and political costs of nuclear programs that become linked, however ambiguously, to military uses will ultimately be borne by us all, to the detriment of peaceful development of our energy future."

Joseph R. Egan is a nuclear engineer and private energy consultant.



Church leader Glemp conferred with government and union leaders about a solution to the current crisis.

not a strike at all; the workplace keeps operating, the workers keep working. But now they work according to their own plan, under their own authority. In effect, the workers take control of the plants and keep them running for social purposes decided on by the workers in cooperation with others in the community. In the first "active strike" at the Sosnowiec coal mine the workers announced they would send the coal they mined to private farmers, daycare centers and nurseries.

Another proposed form of the "active strike" is to make use of all the unused equipment and idle potential that an enterprise might possess and direct the product to social ends. The "strikes" may be of long or short duration, depending on the availability of materials and the immediate goals of the workers. In essence, the "active strikes" are a way of the workers involving themselves in extricating Poland from the crisis. If the state can't do it, the workers must show they can. And, as Boguslawski writes in *News of the Day*, the "active strike" shows that society is not—or at least not yet—faced with the dilemma of choosing between a total general strike, total capitulation or total collaboration with the existing social and political institutions. An "active strike" offers a constructive vision of the future—expressing total distrust of present authorities without directly attacking these authorities.

The workers even hope that some local authorities will support the initiatives, if only out of gratitude that something has got the economy moving. But the question remains whether the "active strikes," if they do take hold, will be able to move the economy, or whether they will be frustrated once again by a state power unwilling to give up anything, for fear of losing everything.

David Ost is in Warsaw on a Fulbright grant to research the Polish workers' movement.

# Poland

Continued from page 9

constructive vision of a viable future, it is all the more important that Solidarity, representing society, offer such a vision.

## A different kind of strike.

That vision may now be embodied in the "active strike," one of the most important innovations the Polish workers' movement has yet offered to the world. It has emerged only in the last couple of weeks, and it has emerged from below, not from the union leadership. The first "active strike" was begun at the Sosnowiec coal mine in lower Silesia in the first days of November. Yet already it is being looked upon as the most powerful and constructive weapon the union has in its arsenal.

Strictly speaking, the "active strike" is

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# Voting

Continued from page 24

least 60 days so that Father Morrisroe could have time to recover and testify. The judge, T. Werth Thagard, declined the request, and the trial proceeded the following morning.

Both Ruby Sales and Joyce Bailey testified, but their eyewitness accounts were disregarded by the all-white jury, who accepted Coleman's account of seeing weapons and acting in self-defense. He was acquitted.

That was 16 years ago. Attorney Gen-

eral Flowers tried again a year later with a charge of assault on Father Morrisroe. By that time things had begun to change in Lowndes County. For instance, he was able to plead his case before an integrated jury. But the fear that the original demonstration had been aimed at was still dominant in the community; Coleman was acquitted again.

Later that year, new black voters turned out by the hundreds at the polls to cast their first ballots—and voted predominantly for the incumbent white candidates. The tales of intimidation were rife, and they were corroborated by the appearance of a tent city near Highway 80, the main road through the county, where a group of black refugees, evicted from plantations for voting, huddled to-

gether. They had nowhere else to go, and some of them had to suffer through both the soggy Alabama winter and another muggy summer before they found a more permanent home.

But bigger changes did come to Lowndes County. By 1970, a black man named John Hulett had built the basics of a working political majority, and the fear had dissipated enough to make it count. He was elected sheriff, the key office in the county. Hulett is still sheriff, having been reelected twice; he faces reelection again in 1982.

Father Morrisroe recovered, later left the priesthood and is now a lawyer in East Chicago, near Gary, Indiana. And Tom Coleman is still living quietly in Hayneville, with an unlisted phone num-

ber. He has had no other problems with the law.

It is stories such as this that come to my mind when I read letters like the one from Senator Byrd. He is unquestionably right that the law discriminates against the South—it was meant to. But far from being a burden, it was one of the greatest gifts America ever gave the South. It gave the region's whites the necessary excuse to do something many of them knew had to be done. Much of the South—typified by Jimmy Carter as Governor of Georgia—has adjusted to the changes wrought in its wake with admirable grace and calm. Many Northern communities have done much worse.

Charles Fager writes for various alternative weeklies nationally.

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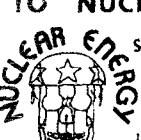
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By Charles Fager

**I** GOT A LETTER FROM MY SENATOR the other day—that's Harry F. Byrd Jr., of Virginia—about the Voting Rights Act, and why Congress should let it expire next year. It's discriminatory against the South, Harry says. And besides, it's no longer needed, he says.

The letter set me to musing about a man named Tom Coleman. September 30 was his 16th anniversary. It was that long ago that Tom Coleman walked out of a courtroom in Lowndes County, Alabama, a free man, after shooting down two unarmed civil rights workers in cold blood.

Jon Daniels, an Episcopal seminarian from New Hampshire and Boston, was the first one he shot, from a few feet away with a 12-gauge pump shotgun. The charge caught Daniels full in the gut, lifted him up and threw him a dozen feet back into the dusty street, dead instantly.

The other target was Father Richard Morrisroe, a Catholic priest from a ghetto church in Chicago. Walking a little behind Daniels, Morrisroe heard the first blast, and turned to run. Coleman shot him in the back. Morrisroe lay in the street, moaning for help and water, for almost 60 minutes before an ambulance came, while Coleman waved his shotgun around to keep people away. Morrisroe was in surgery for 12 hours, but survived.

This happened on August 20, 1965. The Voting Rights Act had just been passed a few weeks before. It authorized the sending of federal examiners into counties and cities with particularly bad voting rights records, and Lowndes County was one of the first areas selected.

#### Voting at the gallows.

It was a good choice. This county, in the heart of the Alabama Black Belt between Montgomery and Selma, was then 80 percent black in population. But there was not a single black registered voter in the county at the beginning of 1965, and hadn't been for many decades. The eligible white population, on the other hand, was more than 100 percent registered, a not uncommon percentage in that region at that time.

When the first groups of blacks defied custom and lined up at the seedy old county courthouse—built, they say, with slave labor—in March 1965 to try to register, the registrars moved the registration office temporarily over to the old jail, and set tables up next to the venerable gallows there. While the blacks were struggling with the state's literacy test, which included such questions as, "what legal and legislative steps would the states of Alabama and Mississippi have to take to combine into one state?" the white registrars talked about the gallows: "I guess many a man dropped through there," one would say. Then another would add, "I wonder if the old thing still works." No wonder it took eight hours to process a grand total of 16 black people's applications.

So it was no surprise that Lowndes County was near the top of the list for federal examiners. The examiners threw out the literacy test and quickly registered several hundred new black voters. But many other blacks were slow to take advantage of their new access to the franchise.

A group of black teenagers told some local civil rights workers from the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC) that they wanted to march in the county's largest town of Fort Deposit, population hardly a thousand, on Saturday, August 14th, to challenge the pervasive atmosphere of intimidation. The SNCC workers, like most black adults, were generally opposed to the march idea, but they settled for urging the youths to stay nonviolent, and to be prepared for violent opposition.

**Blacks used to be afraid to vote in Lowndes County, Alabama. The Voting Rights Act changed that, but it took a lot of marching...and some dying.**

Father Morrisroe was new to the South—just visiting, in fact, on vacation from Chicago's St. Columbanus Church. Daniels had been in the Black Belt all summer practicing a circuit-riding ministry, especially to rural black families, seeking out their isolated farmsteads behind the wheel of a battered Volkswagen beetle. He had a handbook describing the various state and federal assistance programs available to these desperately poor people. Daniels' travels did not go unnoticed or unopposed. He was pursued and fired on at least once while riding around the county.

At first, Daniels had no intention of joining the march. But once he got there, he changed his mind. There were no more than 30 teenagers involved, and the lack of any adult presence among them left them to face the fury of the hostile whites alone. Daniels impulsively decided to walk with them down Fort Deposit's short business street, as they set out to picket three targeted establishments—Herb's City Cafe, McGrough's Grocery and Waters Drygoods. Morrisroe fell in step with his new friend.

The whole thing was over in a few minutes. A crowd of angry whites, armed with clubs, was waiting for the thin line of marchers, and local police snatched them up before they had proceeded much more than a block. They were carried to the county jail in Hayneville in the back of a garbage truck. When SNCC leader Stokeley Carmichael tried to visit the prisoners later that day, he was arrested and tossed in with the rest.

The group spent six days in jail, crowded into three cells with bad food and worse toilets, in muggy Alabama heat. They refused to make bail individually, but it proved hard to arrange for the entire group. On Friday, August 20th, the deputies suddenly opened the gates and ordered them to leave the building—no bail, no nothing, just clear out. Someone called a friend for a ride, while Daniels, Morrisroe, a fellow arrestee Joyce Bailey and a SNCC worker named Ruby Sales went to buy a few sodas. The store was a small, dull-red frame building, decorated mainly by soft drink posters and signs for headache powders. It had been patronized by integrated groups before without incident.

But Tom Coleman was waiting inside the door, with his shotgun. Ruby Sales, leading the way, came up the front steps and saw him first, and heard him say something like, "This store is closed. If you don't get off this god-damned property I'm going to blow your damned brains out. And I mean *get off*."

That apparently was when Jon Daniels saw the shotgun, because he grabbed Ruby Sales and pushed her down, taking the blast himself. Father Morrisroe reacted similarly, pulling Joyce Bailey out of the way. After it was all over,

Coleman walked to the courthouse and called a friend, who happened to be the head of the Alabama State Patrol, Colonel Al Lingo. "I just shot two preachers," he reportedly said to Lingo. "You better get down here." Then he was arraigned on charges of murder, and spent the next night in the same jail his victims had just vacated. He was released the next morning on a few thousand dollars bail.

#### Obliging jury.

Al Lingo did come on down there, and prepared a case for the grand jury. Lingo was at that time probably second only to Governor George Wallace as a public champion of Alabama's segregationist ways. He turned up "evidence" that Daniels and Morrisroe had been armed—the Episcopalian with a knife and the Catholic with a pistol—and hence that Tom Coleman had acted in self-defense. (Their SNCC co-conspirators had allegedly hidden the weapons after the shooting.) The grand jury obligingly reduced the murder charge to manslaughter.

The state Attorney General, Richmond Flowers, on the other hand, was developing a reputation as a moderate on racial matters. He denounced the "case" that had been presented to the grand jury, pointed out that Lingo had refused to show a report of his investigation, and vowed to handle the prosecution himself. He demanded that the trial be delayed at

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